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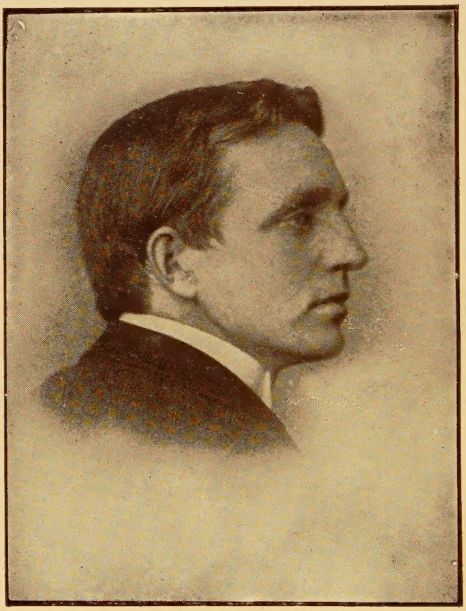

John T. Wood, Jr.

SHORT STORY CLASSICS

(AMERICAN)

VOLUME
THREE

EDITED BY
William Patten

WITH
AN INTRODUCTION
AND NOTES

P. F. COLLIER & SON
NEW YORK

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AGAINST HIS JUDGMENT

BY ROBERT GRANT

Judge Robert Grant (born in Boston, January 24, 1852) began flirting with literature in his court-room about twenty-five years ago, producing several volumes of juvenile stories and trivial verse. Later he took up authorship more seriously, and gradually won his way to the front of all our social philosophers. "Unleavened Bread," his best novel (published in 1900), is a powerful study of character, dealing with three successive matrimonial ventures of an energetic and ambitious but essentially commonplace woman. The present story sets forth an interesting psychological problem, in the solution of which there is shown a wide difference between theory and practice.

AGAINST HIS JUDGMENT

BY ROBERT GRANT

THREE days had passed, and the excitement in the neighborhood was nearly at an end. The apothecary's shop at the corner into which John Baker's body and the living four-year-old child had been carried together immediately after the catastrophe had lost most of its interest for the curious, although the noses of a few idlers were still pressed against the large pane in apparent search of something beyond the brilliant colored bottles or the soda-water fountains. Now that the funeral was over, the womenkind whose windows commanded a view of the house where the dead man had been lying had taken their heads in and resumed their sweeping and washing, and knots of their husbands and fathers no longer stood in gaping conclave close to the very door-sill, rehearsing again and again the details of the distressing incident. Even the little child that had been so miraculously saved from the jaws of death, although still decked in the dirty finery which its mother deemed appropriate to its having suddenly become a public character, was beginning to fall into obscurity and to cease to be the recipient of the dimes of the tender-hearted. Curiously enough, such is the capriciousness of the human temperament

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at times of emotional excitement, the plan of a subscription for the victim's family had not been mooted until what was to its parents a small fortune had been bestowed on the rescued child; but the scale of justice had gradually righted itself, and contributions were now pouring in, especially since it was known that the mayor and several other well-known persons had headed the list with subscriptions of fifty dollars each; and there was reason to believe that a lump sum of from fifteen hundred to two thousand dollars would be collected for the benefit of the widow and seven children before the public generosity was exhausted.

Local interest was on the wane; but, thanks to the telegraph and the press, the facts were being disseminated through the country, and every leading newspaper in the land was chronicling, with more or less periphrasis according to the character of its patrons, the item that John Baker, the gatekeeper at a railroad crossing in a Pennsylvania city, had snatched a toddling child from the pathway of a swiftly moving locomotive and been crushed to death.

A few days later a dinner company of eight was gathered at a country-house several hundred miles distant from the scene of the calamity. The host and hostess were people of wealth and leisure, who enjoyed inviting congenial parties from their social acquaintance in the neighboring city to share with them for two or three days at a time the charms of nature. The dinner was appetizing and the wine good, and all present were engaged in that gracious unbending of self which ordinarily follows the action of re-

freshment and light on minds under the influence of pleasant impressions.

In a tavern the best result is joviality; at the dinner-table of intelligent gentlefolk—and of such we are speaking—the texture of the most agreeable conversation, though smooth as the choicest Lafitte and sparkling as champagne, has ever a thread of seriousness in the woof.

They had talked on a variety of topics: of the climate and landscape of Florida, where two of the party had sojourned during the winter months; of amateur photography, in which the hostess was proficient; of the very general use in common parlance of "don't" for "doesn't" and "but what" for "but that"; of Mrs. Langtry's beauty before she became an actress, concerning which one of the gentlemen who had met her in London was very eloquent; of some recent pictures and publications; of the impropriety and the increasing custom of feeing employees to do their duty; and of certain breaches of trust by bank officers and treasurers that, happening within a short time of one another, had startled the sensibilities of the community. This last subject begot a somewhat doleful train of commentary from two or three of the company, complaints of a too easy-going standard of morality, of a willingness not to be severe on anybody and to pass over lightly faults that our forefathers never would have condoned, of the decay of ideal considerations, and of the lack of enthusiasm for all but money-spinning among the rank and file of the people.

"The gist is here," reiterated in substance one of the speakers: "we insist upon tangible proof of everything, of being able to see and feel it—to get our dollar's worth, in short. We weigh and measure and scrutinize, and discard as fusty and outworn, conduct and guides to conduct that do not promise six per cent per annum in full sight."

"What have you to say to John Baker?" said mine host, breaking the pause that followed these remarks. "I take it for granted that you are all familiar with his story: the newspapers have been full of it. *There* was a man who did not stop to measure or scrutinize."

A murmur of approbation followed, which was interrupted by Mrs. Caspar Green, a stout and rather languid lady, inquiring to whom he referred. "You know I never read the newspapers," she added, with a decidedly superior air, putting up her eyeglass.

"Except the deaths and marriages," exclaimed her husband, a lynx-eyed little stock-broker, who was perpetually poking what he called fun at his more ponderous half.

"Well, this was a death: so there was no excuse for her not seeing it," said Henry Lawford, the host. "No, seriously, Mrs. Green, it was a splendid instance of personal heroism: a gatekeeper at a railway crossing in Pennsylvania, perceiving a child of four on the track just in front of the fast express, rushed forward and managed to snatch up the little creature and deposit it on one side before—poor fellow!—he was struck and killed. There was no suggestion of counting upon six per cent there, was there?"

"Unless in another sphere," interjected Caspar Green.

"Don't be sacrilegious, Caspar," pleaded his wife, though she added her mite to the ripple of laughter that greeted the sally.

"It was superb!—superb!" exclaimed Miss Ann Newbury, a young woman not far from thirty, with a long neck and a high-bred, pale, intellectual face. "He is one of the men who make us proud of being men and women." She spoke with sententious earnestness and looked across the table appealingly at George Gorham.

"He left seven children, I believe?" said he, with precision.

"Yes, seven, Mr. Gorham—the eldest eleven," answered Mrs. Lawford, who was herself the mother of five. "Poor little things!"

"I think he made a great mistake," remarked George, laconically.

For an instant there was a hiatus. The company was evidently making sure that it had understood his speech correctly. Then Miss Newbury gave a gasp, and Henry Lawford, with a certain stern dignity that he knew how to assume, said:

"A mistake? How so, pray?"

"In doing what he did—sacrificing his life to save the child."

"Why, Mr. Gorham!" exclaimed the hostess, while everybody turned toward him. He was a young man between thirty and thirty-five, a lawyer beginning to be well thought of in his profession, with a

thoughtful, pleasant expression and a vigorous physique.

"It seems to me," he continued, slowly, seeking his words, "if John Baker had stopped to think, he would have acted differently. To be sure, he saved the life of an innocent child; but, on the other hand, he robbed of their sole means of support seven other no less innocent children and their mother. He was a brave man, I agree; but I, for one, should have admired him more if he had stopped to think."

"And let the child be killed?" exclaimed Mr. Carter, the gentleman who had deplored so earnestly the decay of ideal considerations. He was a young mill-treasurer, with aristocratic tendencies and a strong interest in church affairs.

"Yes, if needs be. It was in danger through no fault of his. Its natural guardians had neglected it."

"What a frightful view to take!" murmured Mrs. Green; and, although she was very well acquainted with George Gorham's physiognomy, she examined him disapprovingly through her glass, as if there must be something compromising about it that had hitherto escaped detection.

"Well, I don't agree with you at all," said the host, emphatically.

"Nor I," said Mr. Carter.

"Nor I, Mr. Gorham," said Mrs. Lawford, so plaintively as to convey the impression that if a woman as ready as she to accept new points of view abandoned him there could be no chance of his being right.

"No, you're all wrong, my dear fellow," said Caspar Green. "Such ideas may go down among your long-haired artistic and literary friends at the Argonaut Club, but you can't expect civilized Christians to accept them. Why, man, it's monstrous—monstrous, by Jove!—to depreciate that noble fellow's action—a man that we all ought to be proud of, as Miss Newbury says. If we don't encourage such people, how can we expect them to be willing to risk their lives?" Thereupon the little broker, as a relief to his outraged feelings, emptied his champagne glass at a draught and scowled irascibly. His jesting equanimity was rarely disturbed; consequently, everybody felt the importance of his testimony.

"I'm sorry to be so completely in the minority," said Gorham, "but that's the way the matter strikes me. I don't think you quite catch my point, though, Caspar," he added, glancing at Mr. Green. At a less heated moment the company, with the possible exception of Mrs. Green, might have tacitly agreed that this was extremely probable; but now Miss Newbury, who had hitherto refrained from comment in order to digest the problem thoroughly before speaking, came to the broker's aid.

"It seems to me, Mr. Gorham," she said, "that your proposition is a very plain one: you claim simply that John Baker had better not have saved the child if in order to do so it was necessary to lose his own life."

"Precisely," exclaimed Mr. Green, in a tone of some contempt.

"Was not Mr. Gorham's meaning that, though it

required very great courage to do what Baker did, a man who stopped to think of his own wife and children would have shown even greater courage in restraining his impulse to save the child?" asked Miss Emily Vincent. She was the youngest of the party, a beautiful girl, of fine presence, with a round face, dark eyes, and brilliant pink-and-white coloring. She had been invited to stay by the Lawfords because George Gorham was attentive to her; or, more properly speaking, George Gorham had been asked because he was attentive to her.

"Thank you, Miss Vincent: you have expressed my meaning perfectly," said Gorham; and his face gladdened. He was dead in love with her, and this was the first civil word, so to speak, that she had said to him during the visit.

"Do you agree with him?" inquired Miss Newbury, with intellectual sternness.

"And do you agree with Mr. Gorham?" asked Mrs. Lawford, at the same moment, caressingly.

All eyes were turned on Emily Vincent, and she let hers fall confusedly. She felt that she would have given worlds not to have spoken. Why had she spoken?

"I understand what he means; but I don't believe a man in John Baker's place could help himself," she said, quietly.

"Of course he couldn't!" cried Mrs. Lawford. "There, Mr. Gorham, you have lost your champion. What have you to say now?" A murmur of approval went round the table.

"I appreciate my loss, but I fear I have nothing to add to what has been said already," he replied, with smiling firmness. "Although in a pitiful minority, I shall have to stand or fall by that."

"Ah, but when it came to action we know that under all circumstances Mr. Gorham would be his father's son," said Mrs. Lawford, with less than her usual tact, though she intended to be very ingratiating. Gorham's father had been killed in the Civil War, after having become conspicuous for gallantry.

Gorham bowed a little stiffly, feeling that there was nothing for him to say. There was a pause, evincing that the topic was getting threadbare, which prompted the host to anticipate Mr. Carter, who, having caught Miss Newbury's eye, was about to philosophize further on the same lines, by calling his wife's attention to the fact that one of the candles was flaring. This turned the current of conversation, and the subject was not alluded to again.

During the twelve months following his visit at the Lawfords' the attentions of George Gorham to Emily began to be noticeable. He had loved her for three years in secret; but the consciousness that he was not able to support a wife had hindered him from devoting himself pronouncedly to her. He knew that she, or rather her father, had considerable property; but Gorham was not willing to take this into consideration; he would never offer himself until his own income was sufficient for both their needs. But, on the other hand, his ideas of a sufficient income were not extravagant. He looked forward to building a

comfortable little house in the suburbs in the midst of a few acres of garden and lawn, so that his neighbors' windows need not overlook his domesticity. He would have a horse and buggy wherewith to drive his wife through the country on summer afternoons, and later, if his bank-account warranted it, a saddle-horse for Emily and one for himself. He would keep open house in the sense of encouraging his friends to visit him; and, that they might like to come, he would have a thoroughly good plain cook—thereby eschewing French kickshaws—and his parlor and his own snuggery should afford the best new books, and on the walls etchings and sketches winsome to the eye, done by men who were rising rather than men who had risen. There should be no formality; his guests should do what they pleased and wear what they pleased, and, above all, they should become intimate with his wife, instead of merely tolerating her after the manner of the bachelor friends of so many other men.

Thus he had been in the habit of depicting to himself the future as he would have it be, and at last, by dint of strict undeviating attention to his business, he had got to the point where he could afford to realize his project if his lady-love were willing. His practice was increasing steadily, and he had laid by a few thousand dollars to meet any unexpected emergency. His life was insured for fifty thousand dollars, and the policy was now ten years old. He had every reason to expect that in course of time as the older lawyers died off he would either succeed to the lucrative con-

duct of large suits or be made a judge of one of the higher tribunals. In this manner his ambition would be amply satisfied. His aim was to progress slowly but solidly, without splurge or notoriety, until every one came to regard him tacitly as a man of sound dispassionate judgment, keen understanding, and simple, earnest life. His especial antipathy was for so-called cranks, people who went off at half-cock, who thought nothing out, but were governed by the impulse of the moment, shilly-shally and controlled by unmasculine sentimentality.

It was with hope and yet with his heart in his mouth that he set out one afternoon determined to ask Emily Vincent to become his wife. She lived in the suburbs, within fifteen miles by the train, or an hour's walk from town. Gorham took the cars. It was a beautiful day, almost the counterpart of that which they had passed together at the Lawfords' just a year before. As he sat in the train he analyzed the situation once more for the hundredth time, taking care not to give himself the advantage of any ambiguous symptoms. Certainly she was not indifferent to him; she accepted his attentions without demur, and seemed interested in his interests. But was that love? Was it any more than esteem or cordial liking that would turn to pity at the first hint of affection on his part? But surely she could not plead ignorance of his intentions; she must long ere this have realized that he was seriously attentive to her. Still, girls were strange creatures. He could not help feeling nervous, because so very much was involved for him in the result. Should she

refuse him, he would be and remain for a long time excessively unhappy. He obliged himself to regard that alternative, and his heart sank before the possibility of its coming to pass. Not that the idea of dying or doing anything desperate presented itself to him. Such extravagance would have seemed out of keeping with respect either for her or for himself. Doubtless he might recover some day, but the interim would be terribly hard to endure. Rejection meant a dark, dreary bachelorhood; success, the crowning of his dearest hopes.

He found his sweetheart at home, and she came down to greet him with roses that he had sent her in her bosom. It was not easy for him to do or say anything extravagant, and Emily Vincent, while she might have pardoned unseemly effusiveness to his exceeding love for her, was well content with the deeply earnest though unriotous expression of his passion. When finally he had folded her in his arms she felt that the greatest happiness existence can give was hers, and he knew himself to be an utterly blissful lover. He had won the prize for which he had striven with a pertinacity like Jacob's, and life looked very roseate.

The news was broken to her family that evening, and received delightedly, though without the surprise the lovers had expected. They were left alone for a little while before the hour of parting, and in the sweet kisses given and taken Gorham redeemed himself in his mistress's estimation for any lack of folly he had been guilty of when he had asked her to be his wife.

There was riot now in his eyes and in his embraces, revealing that he had needed only to be sure of her encouragement to become as ridiculous as she could desire. He stood disclosed to himself in a new light; and when he had kissed her once more for the last time he went tripping down the lawn radiantly happy, turning now and again to throw back with his fingers a message from his lips to the one being in all the world for him who stood on the threshold, adding poetry and symmetry to the beautiful June evening.

When out of sight of the house, Gorham sped fleetly along the road. He intended to walk to town, for he felt like glorying in his happiness under the full moon which was shedding her silver light from a clear heaven. The air was not oppressive, and it was scented with the perfume of the lilacs and apple-blossoms, so that Gorham was fain every now and then to draw a deep breath in order to inhale their fragrance. There was no dust, and nature looked spruce and trig, without a taint of the frowziness that is observable in the foliage a month later.

Gorham took very little notice of the details; his eyes were busy rather with mind-problems than with the particular beauties of the night; yet his rapt gaze swept the brilliant heaven as though he felt its lustre to be in harmony with the radiance in his own soul. He was imagining the future—his hearth forever blessed by her sweet presence, their mutual joys and sorrows sweetened and alleviated through being shared, his efforts to live a life in accord with the

highest intimations of his being, fortified by her example and counsel. How the pleasures of walking and riding and reading and traveling—of everything, in fact—would be a hundredfold enhanced by being able to interchange impressions with each other! He pictured to himself the cosey evenings they would pass at home beside the lamp when the day's work was done, and the jolly trips they would take together when vacation time arrived. How he would watch over her, and how he would guard her and tend her and comfort her if misfortune came or ill health assailed her! There would be little ones, perhaps, to claim their joint devotion and bid him redouble his energies; he smiled at the thought of baby fingers about his neck, and there arose to his mind's eyes a sweet vision of Emily sitting, pale but triumphant, rocking her new-born child upon her breast.

He walked swiftly on the wings of transport. It was almost as light as day, yet he met but few travelers along the country road. An occasional vehicle passed him, breaking the silvery stillness with its rumble that subsided at last into the distance. A pair of whispering lovers, arm in arm, who slunk into the shadow as he came abreast of them, won from him a glance of sympathy, and just after he had left them behind the shrill whistle of a locomotive jarring upon the silence seemed to bring him a message from the woman he adored. Had he not preferred to walk, that was the train he would have taken, and it must have stopped not many hundred yards from her door. He breathed a prayer of blessing on her rest as he

listened to it thundering past almost parallel to him in the cut below.

A little beyond this point the road curved and ran with gradual incline so as to cross the railroad track at grade about half a mile further on. This stretch of road was lined on each side by horse-chestnut trees set near to one another, the spreading foliage of which darkened the graveled footpath, so that Gorham, who was enjoying the moonlight, preferred to keep in the middle of the road, which, by way of contrast, gleamed almost like a river. He was pursuing his way with elastic steps, when of a sudden his attention was arrested about a hundred and fifty yards from the crossing by something lying at the foot of one of the trees on the right-hand side. At a second glance he saw that it was a woman's figure. Probably she was asleep: but she might be ill or injured. It was a lonely spot: so it occurred to him that it was proper for him to ascertain which. Accordingly he stepped to her side and bent over her. From her calico dress, which was her only covering, she evidently belonged to the laboring class. She was a large, coarse-looking woman, and was lying, in what appeared to Gorham to be drunken slumber, on her bonnet, the draggled strings of which protruded. He hesitated a moment, and then shook her by the arm. She groaned boozily, but after he had shaken her again two or three times she rolled over and raised herself on her elbow, rubbing her eyes and staring at him glassily.

"Are you hurt, woman?" he asked.

She made a guttural response which might have

meant anything, but she proved that she was uninjured by getting on her feet. She stared at her disturber bewilderedly, then, perceiving her bonnet, stooped to pick it up, and stood for a moment trying sleepily to poke it into shape and readjust its tawdry plumage. But all of a sudden she gave a start and began looking around her with recovered energy. She missed something, evidently. Gorham followed the direction of her gaze as it shifted, and as his glance met the line of the road he perceived a little figure standing in the middle of the railway crossing. It was a child—her child, without doubt—and as he said so to himself the roar of an approaching train, coupled with the sound of the whistle, made him start with horror. The late express from town was due. Gorham remembered that there was a considerable curve in the railroad at this point. The woman had not perceived the situation—she was too far in the shade—but Gorham from where he stood commanded a clear view of the track.

Without an instant's hesitation, he sprang forward and ran at full speed. His first thought was that the train was very near. He ran with all his might and main, his eyes fixed on the little white figure and shouting to warn it of its danger. Suddenly there flashed before his mind with vividness the remembrance of John Baker, and he recalled his argument at the Lawfords'. But he did not abate his speed. The child had plumped itself down on one of the sleepers, and was apparently playing with some pebbles. It was on the further track, and, startled by his cries and

by the clang of the approaching train, looked up at him. He saw a pale, besmeared little countenance; he heard behind him the agonizing screams of the mother, who had realized her baby's peril; in his ears rang the shrill warning of the engineer as the engine rounded the curve. Would he be in time?

As he reached the edge of the tracks, thought of Emily and a terrible consciousness of the sorrow she would feel if anything were to happen to him compressed his heart. But he did not falter. He was aware of the jangle of a fiercely rung bell, the hiss of steam, and a blinding glare; he could feel on his cheek the breath of the iron monster. With set teeth he threw himself forward, stooped, and reached out over the rail: in another instant he had tossed the child from the pathway of danger, and he himself had been mangled to death by the powerful engine.

A MICHIGAN MAN

BY ELIA W. PEATTIE

Elia Wilkinson (born at Kalamazoo, Mich., January 15, 1862) married in 1883 Robert Burns Peattie, a Chicago newspaper man, and soon after achieved a reputation in journalism for herself. She has written many short stories, through all of which runs a line of distinct individuality, a strong cord, as it were, intertwisted of ruddy heart-strings and the virid tendrils of nature. "A Michigan Man" is a typical story of the author's, presenting in simple yet powerful fashion the spell which the forest exerts over its destroyer, the lumberman.

A MICHIGAN MAN

BY ELIA W PEATTIE

A PINE forest is nature's expression of solemnity and solitude. Sunlight, rivers, cascades, people, music, laughter, or dancing could not make it gay. With its unceasing reverberations and its eternal shadows, it is as awful and as holy as a cathedral.

Thirty good fellows working together by day and drinking together by night can keep up but a moody imitation of jollity. Spend twenty-five of your forty years, as Luther Dallas did, in this perennial gloom, and your soul—that which enjoys, aspires, competes—will be drugged as deep as if you had quaffed the cup of oblivion. Luther Dallas was counted one of the most experienced axe-men in the northern camps. He could fell a tree with the swift surety of an executioner, and in revenge for his many arboral murders the woodland had taken captive his mind, captured and chained it as Prospero did Ariel. The resounding footsteps of Progress driven on so mercilessly in this mad age could not reach his fastness. It did not concern him that men were thinking, investigating, inventing. His senses responded only to the sonorous music of the woods; a steadfast wind ringing metallic melody from the pine-tops contented him as the sound of the

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sea does the sailor; and dear as the odors of the ocean to the mariner were the resinous scents of the forest to him. Like a sailor, too, he had his superstitions. He had a presentiment that he was to die by one of these trees—that some day, in chopping, the tree would fall upon and crush him as it did his father the day they brought him back to the camp on a litter of pine boughs.

One day the gang boss noticed a tree that Dallas had left standing in a most unwoodmanlike manner in the section which was allotted to him.

"What in thunder is that standing there for?" he asked.

Dallas raised his eyes to the pine, towering in stern dignity a hundred feet above them.

"Well," he said, feebly, "I noticed it, but kind-a left it t' the last."

"Cut it down to-morrow," was the response.

The wind was rising, and the tree muttered savagely. Luther thought it sounded like a menace, and turned pale. No trouble has yet been found that will keep a man awake in the keen air of the pineries after he has been swinging his axe all day, but the sleep of the chopper was so broken with disturbing dreams that night that the beads gathered on his brow, and twice he cried aloud. He ate his coarse flap-jacks in the morning and escaped from the smoky shanty as soon as he could.

"It'll bring bad luck, I'm afraid," he muttered as he went to get his axe from the rack. He was as fond of his axe as a soldier of his musket, but to-day

he shouldered it with reluctance. He felt like a man with his destiny before him. The tree stood like a sentinel. He raised his axe, once, twice, a dozen times, but could not bring himself to make a cut in the bark. He walked backward a few steps and looked up. The funereal green seemed to grow darker and darker till it became black. It was the embodiment of sorrow. Was it not shaking giant arms at him? Did it not cry out in angry challenge? Luther did not try to laugh at his fears; he had never seen any humor in life. A gust of wind had someway crept through the dense barricade of foliage that flanked the clearing, and struck him with an icy chill. He looked at the sky: the day was advancing rapidly. He went at his work with an energy as determined as despair. The axe in his practiced hand made clean straight cuts in the trunk, now on this side, now on that. His task was not an easy one, but he finished it with wonderful expedition. After the chopping was finished, the tree stood firm a moment; then, as the tensely strained fibres began a weird moaning, he sprang aside, and stood waiting. In the distance he saw two men hewing a log. The axe-man sent them a shout and threw up his arms for them to look. The tree stood out clear and beautiful against the gray sky; the men ceased their work and watched it. The vibrations became more violent, and the sounds they produced grew louder and louder till they reached a shrill wild cry. There came a pause; then a deep shuddering groan. The topmost branches began to move slowly, the whole stately bulk swayed, and then shot toward the

ground. The gigantic trunk bounded from the stump, recoiled like a cannon, crashed down, and lay conquered, with a roar as of an earthquake, in a cloud of flying twigs and chips.

When the dust had cleared away, the men at the log on the outside of the clearing could not see Luther. They ran to the spot, and found him lying on the ground with his chest crushed in. His fearful eyes had not rightly calculated the distance from the stump to the top of the pine, nor rightly weighed the power of the massed branches, and so, standing spell-bound, watching the descending trunk as one might watch his Nemesis, the rebound came and left him lying worse than dead.

Three months later, when the logs, lopped of their branches, drifted down the streams, the woodman, a human log lopped of his strength, drifted to a great city. A change, the doctor said, might prolong his life. The lumbermen made up a purse, and he started out, not very definitely knowing his destination. He had a sister, much younger than himself, who at the age of sixteen had married and gone, he believed, to Chicago. That was years ago, but he had an idea that he might find her. He was not troubled by his lack of resources: he did not believe that any man would want for a meal unless he were "shiftless." He had always been able to turn his hand to something.

He felt too ill from the jostling of the cars to notice much of anything on the journey. The dizzy scenes whirling past made him faint, and he was glad to lie with closed eyes. He imagined that his little sister in

her pink calico frock and bare feet (as he remembered her) would be at the station to meet him. "Oh, Lu!" she would call from some hiding-place, and he would go and find her.

The conductor stopped by Luther's seat and said that they were in the city at last; but it seemed to the sick man as if they went miles after that, with a multitude of twinkling lights on one side and a blank darkness that they told him was the lake on the other. The conductor again stopped by his seat.

"Well, my man," said he, "how are you feeling?"

Luther, the possessor of the toughest muscles in the gang, felt a sick man's irritation at the tone of pity.

"Oh, I'm all right!" he said, gruffly, and shook off the assistance the conductor tried to offer with his overcoat. "I'm going to my sister's," he explained, in answer to the inquiry as to where he was going. The man, somewhat piqued at the spirit in which his overtures were met, left him, and Luther stepped on to the platform. There was a long vista of semi-light, down which crowds of people walked and baggagemen rushed. The building, if it deserved the name, seemed a ruin, and through the arched doors Luther could see men—hackmen—dancing and howling like dervishes. Trains were coming and going, and the whistles and bells kept up a ceaseless clangor. Luther, with his small satchel and uncouth dress, slouched by the crowd unnoticed, and reached the street. He walked amid such an illumination as he had never dreamed of, and paused half blinded in the glare of a broad sheet of electric light that filled a pillared en-

trance into which many people passed. He looked about him. Above on every side rose great, many-windowed buildings; on the street the cars and carriages thronged, and jostling crowds dashed headlong among the vehicles. After a time he turned down a street that seemed to him a pandemonium filled with madmen. It went to his head like wine, and hardly left him the presence of mind to sustain a quiet exterior. The wind was laden with a penetrating moisture that chilled him as the dry icy breezes from Huron never had done, and the pain in his lungs made him faint and dizzy. He wondered if his red-cheeked little sister could live in one of those vast, impregnable buildings. He thought of stopping some of those serious-looking men and asking them if they knew her, but he could not muster up the courage. The distressing experience that comes to almost every one some time in life, of losing all identity in the universal humanity, was becoming his. The tears began to roll down his wasted face from loneliness and exhaustion. He grew hungry with longing for the dirty but familiar cabins of the camp, and staggered along with eyes half closed, conjuring visions of the warm interiors, the leaping fires, the groups of laughing men seen dimly through clouds of tobacco smoke.

A delicious scent of coffee met his hungry sense and made him really think he was taking the savory black draught from his familiar tin cup; but the muddy streets, the blinding lights, the cruel, rushing people, were still there. The buildings, however, now became different. They were lower and meaner, with

dirty windows. Women laughing loudly crowded about the doors, and the establishments seemed to be equally divided between saloon-keepers, pawnbrokers, and dealers in second-hand clothes. Luther wondered where they all drew their support from. Upon one signboard he read, "Lodgings 10 cents to 50 cents. A Square Meal for 15 cents," and, thankful for some haven, entered. Here he spent his first night and other nights, while his purse dwindled and his strength waned. At last he got a man in a drug store to search the directory for his sister's residence. They found a name he took to be his brother-in-law's. It was two days later when he found the address—a great, many-storied mansion on one of the southern boulevards—and found also that his search had been in vain. Sore and faint, he staggered back to his miserable shelter, only to arise feverish and ill in the morning. He frequented the great shop doors, thronged with brilliantly dressed ladies, and watched to see if his little sister might not dash up in one of those satin-lined coaches and take him were he would be warm and safe and would sleep undisturbed by drunken, ribald songs and loathsome surroundings. There were days when he almost forgot his name, and, striving to remember, would lose his senses for a moment and drift back to the harmonious solitudes of the North and breathe the resin-scented frosty atmosphere. He grew terrified at the blood he coughed from his lacerated lungs, and wondered bitterly why the boys did not come to take him home.

One day, as he painfully dragged himself down a

residence street, he tried to collect his thoughts and form some plan for the future. He had no trade, understood no handiwork: he could fell trees! He looked at the gaunt, scrawny, transplanted specimens that met his eye, and gave himself up to the homesickness that filled his soul. He slept that night in the shelter of a stable, and spent his last money in the morning for a biscuit.

He traveled many miles that afternoon looking for something to which he might turn his hand. Once he got permission to carry a hod for half an hour. At the end of that time he fainted. When he recovered, the foreman paid him twenty-five cents. "For God's sake, man, go home," he said. Luther stared at him with a white face and went on.

There came days when he so forgot his native dignity as to beg. He seldom received anything; he was referred to various charitable institutions whose existence he had never heard of.

One morning, when a pall of smoke enveloped the city and the odors of coal-gas refused to lift their nauseating poison through the heavy air, Luther, chilled with dew and famished, awoke to a happier life. The loneliness at his heart was gone. The feeling of hopeless imprisonment that the miles and miles of streets had terrified him with gave place to one of freedom and exaltation. Above him he heard the rasping of pine boughs; his feet trod on a rebounding mat of decay; the sky was as coldly blue as the bosom of Huron. He walked as if on ether, singing a senseless jargon the woodmen had aroused the echoes with:

"Hi yi halloo!
The owl sees you!
Look what you do!
Hi yi halloo!"

Swung over his shoulder was a stick he had used to assist his limping gait, but now transformed into the beloved axe. He would reach the clearing soon, he thought, and strode on like a giant, while people hurried from his path. Suddenly a smooth trunk, stripped of its bark and bleached by weather, arose before him.

"Hi yi halloo!" High went the wasted arm—crash! —a broken staff, a jingle of wires, a maddened, shouting man the centre of a group of amused spectators! A few moments later, four broad-shouldered men in blue had him in their grasp, pinioned and guarded, clattering over the noisy streets behind two spirited horses. They drew after them a troop of noisy, jeering boys, who danced about the wagon like a swirl of autumn leaves. Then came a halt, and Luther was dragged up the steps of a square brick building with a belfry on the top. They entered a large bare room with benches ranged about the walls, and brought him before a man at a desk.

"What is your name?" asked the man at the desk.

"Hi yi halloo!" said Luther.

"He's drunk, sergeant," said one of the men in blue, and the axe-man was led into the basement. He was conscious of an involuntary resistance, a short struggle, and a final shock of pain—then oblivion.

The chopper awoke to the realization of three stone walls and an iron grating in front. Through this he looked out upon a stone flooring across which was a row of similar apartments. He neither knew nor cared where he was. The feeling of imprisonment was no greater than he had felt on the endless, cheerless streets. He laid himself on the bench that ran along a side wall, and, closing his eyes, listened to the babble of the clear stream and the thunder of the "drive" on its journey. How the logs hurried and jostled! crushing, whirling, ducking, with the merry lads leaping about them with shouts and laughter. Suddenly he was recalled by a voice. Some one handed a narrow tin cup full of coffee and a thick slice of bread through the grating. Across the way he dimly saw a man eating a similar slice of bread. Men in other compartments were swearing and singing. He knew these now for the voices he had heard in his dreams. He tried to force some of the bread down his parched and swollen throat, but failed; the coffee strangled him, and he threw himself upon the bench.

The forest again, the night-wind, the whistle of the axe through the air! Once when he opened his eyes he found it dark. It would soon be time to go to work. He fancied there would be hoar-frost on the trees in the morning. How close the cabin seemed! Ha!—here came his little sister. Her voice sounded like the wind on a spring morning. How loud it swelled now! "Lu! Lu!" she cried.

The next morning the lock-up keeper opened the

cell door. Luther lay with his head in a pool of blood. His soul had escaped from the thrall of the forest.

"Well, well!" said the little fat police justice, when he was told of it. "We ought to have a doctor around to look after such cases."

MY TERMINAL MORAINE

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON

Of Francis Richard Stockton (born in Philadelphia, April 5, 1834; died in 1902) Mr. W. D. Howells wrote: "He is of the few, of the little group sparely increased by the fastidious ages, whom we call masters. . . . The means in all [his stories] have been the same: the quiet confidence that every intelligent person enjoys an absurdity reduced from the most logical argument, and prefers the wildest capers of the fancy performed with a countenance of the gravest sobriety." Of Stockton's style Mr. Henry C. Vedder said: "It is very plain, simple, flowing English, the sort of writing that appears to the inexperienced the easiest thing in the world to do—until they have tried." "My Terminal Moraine" is a typical Stockton story which was written specially for COLLIER'S *"Once a Week Library."*

MY TERMINAL MORAINE

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON

A MAN'S birth is generally considered the most important event of his existence, but I truly think that what I am about to relate was more important to me than my entrance into this world; because, had not these things happened, I am of the opinion that my life would have been of no value to me and my birth a misfortune.

My father, Joshua Cuthbert, died soon after I came to my majority, leaving me what he had considered a comfortable property. This consisted of a large house and some forty acres of land, nearly the whole of which lay upon a bluff, which upon three sides descended to a little valley, through which ran a gentle stream. I had no brothers or sisters. My mother died when I was a boy, and I, Walter Cuthbert, was left the sole representative of my immediate family.

My estate had been a comfortable one to my father, because his income from the practice of his profession as a physician enabled him to keep it up and provide satisfactorily for himself and me. I had no profession and but a very small income, the result of a few investments my father had made. Left to myself, I felt no inducement to take up any profession or business. My wants were simple, and for a few years I

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lived without experiencing any inconvenience from the economies which I was obliged to practice. My books, my dog, my gun and my rod made life pass very pleasantly to me, and the subject of an increase of income never disturbed my mind.

But as time passed on the paternal home began to present an air of neglect and even dilapidation, which occasionally attracted my attention and caused, as I incidentally discovered, a great deal of unfavorable comment among my neighbors, who thought that I should go to work and at least earn money enough to put the house and grounds in a condition which should not be unworthy the memory of the good Dr. Cuthbert. In fact, I began to be looked upon as a shiftless young man; and, now and then, I found a person old enough and bold enough to tell me so.

But, instead of endeavoring to find some suitable occupation by which I might better my condition and improve my estate, I fell in love, which, in the opinion of my neighbors, was the very worst thing that could have happened to me at this time. I lived in a thrifty region, and for a man who could not support himself to think of taking upon him the support of a wife, especially such a wife as Agnes Havelot would be, was considered more than folly and looked upon as a crime. Everybody knew that I was in love with Miss Havelot, for I went to court her as boldly as I went to fish or shoot. There was a good deal of talk about it, and this finally came to the ears of Mr. Havelot, my lady's father, who, thereupon, promptly ordered her to have no more to do with me.

The Havelot estate, which adjoined mine, was a very large one, containing hundreds and hundreds of acres; and the Havelots were rich, rich enough to frighten any poor young man of marrying intent. But I did not appreciate the fact that I was a poor young man. I had never troubled my head about money as it regarded myself, and I now did not trouble my head about it as it regarded Agnes. I loved her, I hoped she loved me, and all other considerations were thrown aside. Mr. Havelot, however, was a man of a different way of thinking.

It was a little time before I became convinced that the decision of Agnes's father, that there should be no communication between that dear girl and myself, really meant anything. I had never been subjected to restrictions, and I did not understand how people of spirit could submit to them; but I was made to understand it when Mr. Havelot, finding me wandering about his grounds, very forcibly assured me that if I should make my appearance there again, or if he discovered any attempt on my part to communicate with his daughter in any way, he would send her from home. He concluded the very brief interview by stating that if I had any real regard for his daughter's happiness I would cease attentions which would meet with the most decided disapprobation from her only surviving parent and which would result in exiling her from home. I begged for one more interview with Miss Havelot, and if it had been granted I should have assured her of the state of my affections, no matter if there were reasons to suppose that

I would never see her again; but her father very sternly forbade anything of the kind, and I went away crushed.

It was a very hard case, for if I played the part of a bold lover and tried to see Agnes without regard to the wicked orders of her father, I should certainly be discovered; and then it would be not only myself, but the poor girl, who would suffer. So I determined that I would submit to the Havelot decree. No matter if I never saw her again, never heard the sound of her voice, it would be better to have her near me, to have her breathe the same air, cast up her eyes at the same sky, listen to the same birds, that I breathed, looked at and listened to, than to have her far away, probably in Kentucky, where I knew she had relatives, and where the grass was blue and the sky probably green, or at any rate would appear so to her if in the least degree she felt as I did in regard to the ties of home and the affinities between the sexes.

I now found myself in a most doleful and even desperate condition of mind. There was nothing in the world which I could have for which I cared. Hunting, fishing, and the rambles through woods and fields that had once been so delightful to me now became tasks which I seldom undertook. The only occupation in which I felt the slightest interest was that of sitting in a tower of my house with a telescope, endeavoring to see my Agnes on some portion of her father's grounds; but, although I diligently directed my glass at the slightest stretch of lawn or bit of path which I could discern through openings

in the foliage, I never caught sight of her. I knew, however, by means of daily questions addressed to my cook, whose daughter was a servant in the Havelot house, that Agnes was yet at home. For that reason I remained at home. Otherwise, I should have become a wanderer.

About a month after I had fallen into this most unhappy state an old friend came to see me. We had been school-fellows, but he differed from me in almost every respect. He was full of ambition and energy, and, although he was but a few years older than myself, he had already made a name in the world. He was a geologist, earnest and enthusiastic in his studies and his investigations. He told me frankly that the object of his visit was twofold. In the first place, he wanted to see me, and, secondly, he wanted to make some geological examinations on my grounds, which were situated, as he informed me, upon a terminal moraine, a formation which he had not yet had an opportunity of practically investigating.

I had not known that I lived on a moraine, and now that I knew it, I did not care. But Tom Burton glowed with high spirits and lively zeal as he told me how the great bluff on which my house stood, together with the other hills and wooded terraces which stretched away from it along the side of the valley, had been formed by the minute fragments of rock and soil, which, during ages and ages, had been gradually pushed down from the mountains by a great glacier which once occupied the country to the northeast of my house. "Why, Walter, my boy," he cried, "if I

had not read it all in the books I should have known for myself, as soon as I came here, that there had once been a glacier up there, and as it gradually moved to the southwest it had made this country what it is. Have you a stream down there in that dell which I see lies at right angles with the valley and opens into it?"

"No," said I; "I wish there were one. The only stream we have flows along the valley and not on my property."

Without waiting for me Tom ran down into my dell, pushed his way through the underbrush to its upper end, and before long came back flushed with heat and enthusiasm.

"Well, sir," he said, "that dell was once the bed of a glacial stream, and you may as well clear it out and plant corn there if you want to, for there never will be another stream flowing through it until there is another glacier out in the country beyond. And now I want you to let me dig about here. I want to find out what sort of stuff the glacier brought down from the mountains. I will hire a man and will promise you to fill up all the holes I make."

I had no objection to my friend's digging as much as he pleased, and for three days he busied himself in getting samples of the soil of my estate. Sometimes I went out and looked at him, and gradually a little of his earnest ardor infused itself into me, and with some show of interest I looked into the holes he had made and glanced over the mineral specimens he showed me.

"Well, Walter," said he, when he took leave of me,

"I am very sorry that I did not discover that the glacier had raked out the bed of a gold mine from the mountains up there and brought it down to you, or at any rate, some valuable iron ore. But I am obliged to say it did not do anything of the sort. But I can tell you one thing it brought you, and, although it is not of any great commercial value, I should think you could make good use of it here on your place. You have one of the finest deposits of gravel on this bluff that I have met with, and if you were to take out a lot of it and spread it over your driveways and paths, it would make it a great deal pleasanter for you to go about here in bad weather and would wonderfully improve your property. Good roads always give an idea of thrift and prosperity." And then he went away with a valise nearly full of mineral specimens which he assured me were very interesting.

My interest in geological formations died away as soon as Tom Burton had departed, but what he said about making gravel roads giving the place an air of thrift and prosperity had its effect upon my mind. It struck me that it would be a very good thing if people in the neighborhood, especially the Havelots, were to perceive on my place some evidences of thrift and prosperity. Most palpable evidences of unthrift and impecuniosity had cut me off from Agnes, and why might it not be that some signs of improved circumstances would remove, to a degree at least, the restrictions which had been placed between us? This was but a very little thing upon which to build hopes;

but ever since men and women have loved they have built grand hopes upon very slight foundations. I determined to put my roadways in order.

My efforts in this direction were really evidence of anything but thriftiness, for I could not in the least afford to make my drives and walks resemble the smooth and beautiful roads which wound over the Havelot estate, although to do this was my intention, and I set about the work without loss of time. I took up this occupation with so much earnestness that it seriously interfered with my observations from the tower.

I hired two men and set them to work to dig a gravel-pit. They made excavations at several places, and very soon found what they declared to be a very fine quality of road-gravel. I ordered them to dig on until they had taken out what they believed to be enough to cover all my roads. When this had been done, I would have it properly spread and rolled. As this promised to be a very good job, the men went to work in fine spirits and evidently made up their minds that the improvements I desired would require a vast deal of gravel.

When they had dug a hole so deep that it became difficult to throw up the gravel from the bottom, I suggested that they should dig at some other place. But to this they objected, declaring that the gravel was getting better and better, and it would be well to go on down as long as the quality continued to be so good. So, at last, they put a ladder into the pit, one man carrying the gravel up in a hod, while the other dug

it; and when they had gone down so deep that this was no longer practicable, they rigged up a derrick and windlass and drew up the gravel in a bucket.

Had I been of a more practical turn of mind I might have perceived that this method of working made the job a very long and, consequently, to the laborers, a profitable one; but no such idea entered into my head, and not noticing whether they were bringing up sand or gravel I allowed them to proceed.

One morning I went out to the spot where the excavation was being made and found that the men had built a fire on the ground near the opening of the pit, and that one of them was bending over it warming himself. As the month was July this naturally surprised me, and I inquired the reason for so strange a performance.

"Upon my soul," said the man, who was rubbing his hands over the blaze, "I do not wonder you are surprised, but it's so cold down at the bottom of that pit that me fingers is almost frosted; and we haven't struck any wather neither, which couldn't be expected, of course, a-diggin' down into the hill like this."

I looked into the hole and found it was very deep. "I think it would be better to stop digging here," said I, "and try some other place."

"I wouldn't do that just now," said the other man, who was preparing to go down in the bucket; "to be sure, it's a good deal more like a well than a gravel-pit, but it's bigger at the top than at the bottom, and there's no danger of its cavin' in, and now that we've

got everything rigged up all right, it would be a pity to make a change yet awhile."

So I let them go on; but the next day when I went out again I found that they had come to the conclusion that it was time to give up digging in that hole. They both declared that it almost froze their feet to stand on the ground where they worked at the bottom of the excavation. The slow business of drawing up the gravel by means of a bucket and windlass was, therefore, reluctantly given up. The men now went to work to dig outward from this pit toward the edge of the bluff which overlooked my little dell, and gradually made a wide trench, which they deepened until —and I am afraid to say how long they worked before this was done—they could walk to the original pit from the level of the dell. They then deepened the inner end of the trench, wheeling out the gravel in barrows, until they had made an inclined pathway from the dell to the bottom of the pit. The wheeling now became difficult, and the men soon declared that they were sure that they had quite gravel enough.

When they made this announcement, and I had gone into some financial calculations, I found that I would be obliged to put an end to my operations, at least for the present, for my available funds were gone, or would be when I had paid what I owed for the work. The men were very much disappointed by the sudden ending of this good job, but they departed, and I was left to gaze upon a vast amount of gravel, of which, for the present at least, I could not afford to make the slightest use.

The mental despondency which had been somewhat lightened during my excavating operations now returned, and I became rather more gloomy and downcast than before. My cook declared that it was of no use to prepare meals which I never ate, and suggested that it would save money if I discharged her. As I had not paid her anything for a long time, I did not see how this would benefit me.

Wandering about one day with my hat pulled down over my eyes and my hands thrust deep into my pockets, I strolled into the dell and stood before the wide trench which led to the pit in which I had foolishly sunk the money which should have supported me for months. I entered this dismal passage and walked slowly and carefully down the incline until I reached the bottom of the original pit, where I had never been before. I stood here looking up and around me and wondering how men could bring themselves to dig down into such dreary depths simply for the sake of a few dollars a week, when I involuntarily began to stamp my feet. They were very cold, although I had not been there more than a minute. I wondered at this and took up some of the loose gravel in my hand. It was quite dry, but it chilled my fingers. I did not understand it, and I did not try to, but walked up the trench and around into the dell, thinking of Agnes.

I was very fond of milk, which, indeed, was almost the only food I now cared for, and I was consequently much disappointed at my noonday meal when I found that the milk had soured and was not fit to drink.

"You see, sir," said Susan, "ice is very scarce and dear, and we can not afford to buy much of it. There was no freezin' weather last winter, and the price has gone up as high as the thermometer, sir, and so, between the two of 'em, I can't keep things from spoilin'."

The idea now came to me that if Susan would take the milk, and anything else she wished to keep cool in this hot weather, to the bottom of the gravel-pit, she would find the temperature there cold enough to preserve them without ice, and I told her so.

The next morning Susan came to me with a pleased countenance and said, "I put the butter and the milk in that pit last night, and the butter's just as hard and the milk's as sweet as if it had been kept in an ice-house. But the place is as cold as an ice-house, sir, and unless I am mistaken, there's ice in it. Anyway, what do you call that?" And she took from a little basket a piece of grayish ice as large as my fist. "When I found it was so cold down there, sir," she said, "I thought I would dig a little myself and see what made it so; and I took a fire-shovel and hatchet, and, when I had scraped away some of the gravel, I came to something hard and chopped off this piece of it, which is real ice, sir, or I know nothing about it. Perhaps there used to be an ice-house there, and you might get some of it if you dug, though why anybody should put it down so deep and then cover it up, I'm sure I don't know. But as long as there's any there, I think we should get it out, even if there's only a little of it; for I can not take everything down to

that pit, and we might as well have it in the refrigerator."

This seemed to me like very good sense, and if I had had a man I should have ordered him to go down to the pit and dig up any lumps of ice he might find and bring them to the house. But I had no man, and I therefore became impressed with the opinion that if I did not want to drink sour milk for the rest of the summer, it might be a good thing for me to go down there and dig out some of the ice myself. So with pickaxe and shovel I went to the bottom of the pit and set myself to work.

A few inches below the surface I found that my shovel struck something hard, and, clearing away the gravel from this for two or three square feet, I looked down upon a solid mass of ice. It was dirty and begrimed, but it was truly ice. With my pick I detached some large pieces of it. These, with some discomfort, I carried out into the dell where Susan might come with her basket and get them.

For several days Susan and I took out ice from the pit, and then I thought that perhaps Tom Burton might feel some interest in this frozen deposit in my terminal moraine, and so I wrote to him about it. He did not answer my letter, but instead arrived himself the next afternoon.

"Ice at the bottom of a gravel-pit," said he, "is a thing I never heard of. Will you lend me a spade and a pickaxe?"

When Tom came out of that pit—it was too cold a place for me to go with him and watch his

proceedings—I saw him come running toward the house.

"Walter," he shouted, "we must hire all the men we can find and dig, dig, dig. If I am not mistaken something has happened on your place that is wonderful almost beyond belief. But we must not stop to talk. We must dig, dig, dig; dig all day and dig all night. Don't think of the cost. I'll attend to that. I'll get the money. What we must do is to find men and set them to work."

"What's the matter?" said I. "What has happened?"

"I haven't time to talk about it now; besides I don't want to, for fear that I should find that I am mistaken. But get on your hat, my dear fellow, and let's go over to the town for men."

The next day there were eight men working under the direction of my friend Burton, and although they did not work at night as he wished them to do, they labored steadfastly for ten days or more before Tom was ready to announce what it was he had hoped to discover, and whether or not he had found it. For a day or two I watched the workmen from time to time, but after that I kept away, preferring to await the result of my friend's operations. He evidently expected to find something worth having, and whether he was successful or not, it suited me better to know the truth all at once and not by degrees.

On the morning of the eleventh day Tom came into the room where I was reading and sat down near me. His face was pale, his eyes glittering. "Old friend,"

said he, and as he spoke I noticed that his voice was a little husky, although it was plain enough that his emotion was not occasioned by bad fortune—"my good old friend, I have found out what made the bottom of your gravel-pit so uncomfortably cold. You need not doubt what I am going to tell you, for my excavations have been complete and thorough enough to make me sure of what I say. Don't you remember that I told you that ages ago there was a vast glacier in the country which stretches from here to the mountains? Well, sir, the foot of that glacier must have reached further this way than is generally supposed. At any rate a portion of it did extend in this direction as far as this bit of the world which is now yours. This end or spur of the glacier, nearly a quarter of a mile in width, I should say, and pushing before it a portion of the terminal moraine on which you live, came slowly toward the valley until suddenly it detached itself from the main glacier and disappeared from sight. That is to say, my boy"—and as he spoke Tom sprang to his feet, too excited to sit any longer—"it descended to the bowels of the earth, at least for a considerable distance in that direction. Now you want to know how this happened. Well, I'll tell you. In this part of the country there are scattered about here and there great caves. Geologists know one or two of them, and it is certain that there are others undiscovered. Well, sir, your glacier spur discovered one of them, and when it had lain over the top of it for an age or two, and had grown bigger and bigger, and heavier and heavier, it at last burst through the rock

roof of the cave, snapping itself from the rest of the glacier and falling in one vast mass to the bottom of the subterranean abyss. Walter, it is there now. The rest of the glacier came steadily down; the moraines were forced before it; they covered up this glacier spur, this broken fragment, and by the time the climate changed and the average of temperature rose above that of the glacial period, this vast sunken mass of ice was packed away below the surface of the earth, out of the reach of the action of friction, or heat, or moisture, or anything else which might destroy it. And through all the long procession of centuries that broken end of the glacier has been lying in your terminal moraine. It is there now. It is yours, Walter Cuthbert. It is an ice-mine. It is wealth, and so far as I can make out, it is nearly all upon your land. To you is the possession, but to me is the glory of the discovery. A bit of the glacial period kept in a cave for us! It is too wonderful to believe! Walter, have you any brandy?"

It may well be supposed that by this time I was thoroughly awakened to the importance and the amazing character of my friend's discovery, and I hurried with him to the scene of operations. There he explained everything and showed me how, by digging away a portion of the face of the bluff, he had found that this vast fragment of the glacier, which had been so miraculously preserved, ended in an irregularly perpendicular wall, which extended downward he knew not how far, and the edge of it on its upper side had been touched by my workmen in digging their pit.

"It was the gradual melting of the upper end of this glacier," said Tom, "probably more elevated than the lower end, that made your dell. I wondered why the depression did not extend further up toward the spot where the foot of the glacier was supposed to have been. This end of the fragment, being sunk in deeper and afterward covered up more completely, probably never melted at all."

"It is amazing—astounding," said I; "but what of it, now that we have found it?"

"What of it?" cried Tom, and his whole form trembled as he spoke. "You have here a source of wealth, of opulence which shall endure for the rest of your days. Here at your very door, where it can be taken out and transported with the least possible trouble, is ice enough to supply the town, the county, yes, I might say, the State, for hundreds of years. No, sir, I can not go in to supper. I can not eat. I leave to you the business and practical part of this affair. I go to report upon its scientific features."

"Agnes," I exclaimed, as I walked to the house with my hands clasped and my eyes raised to the sky, "the glacial period has given thee to me!"

This did not immediately follow, although I went that very night to Mr. Havelot and declared to him that I was now rich enough to marry his daughter. He laughed at me in a manner which was very annoying, and made certain remarks which indicated that he thought it probable that it was not the roof of the cave, but my mind, which had given way under the influence of undue pressure.

The contemptuous manner in which I had been received aroused within me a very unusual state of mind. While talking to Mr. Havelot I heard not far away in some part of the house a voice singing. It was the voice of Agnes, and I believed she sang so that I could hear her. But as her sweet tones reached my ear there came to me at the same time the harsh, contemptuous words of her father. I left the house determined to crush that man to the earth beneath a superincumbent mass of ice—or the evidence of the results of the ownership of such a mass—which would make him groan and weep as he apologized to me for his scornful and disrespectful utterances and at the same time offered me the hand of his daughter.

When the discovery of the ice-mine, as it grew to be called, became generally known, my grounds were crowded by sightseers, and reporters of newspapers were more plentiful than squirrels. But the latter were referred to Burton, who would gladly talk to them as long as they could afford to listen, and I felt myself at last compelled to shut my gates to the first.

I had offers of capital to develop this novel source of wealth, and I accepted enough of this assistance to enable me to begin operations on a moderate scale. It was considered wise not to uncover any portion of the glacier spur, but to construct an inclined shaft down to its wall-like end and from this tunnel into the great mass. Immediately the leading ice company of the neighboring town contracted with me for all the ice I could furnish, and the flood-gates of affluence began slowly to rise.

The earliest, and certainly one of the greatest, benefits which came to me from this bequest from the unhistoric past was the new energy and vigor with which my mind and body were now infused. My old, careless method of life and my recent melancholy, despairing mood were gone, and I now began to employ myself upon the main object of my life with an energy and enthusiasm almost equal to that of my friend, Tom Burton. This present object of my life was to prepare my home for Agnes.

The great piles of gravel which my men had dug from the well-like pit were spread upon the roadways and rolled smooth and hard; my lawn was mowed; my flower-beds and borders put in order; useless bushes and undergrowth cut out and cleared away; my outbuildings were repaired and the grounds around my house rapidly assumed their old appearance of neatness and beauty.

Ice was very scarce that summer, and, as the wagons wound away from the opening of the shaft which led down to the glacier, carrying their loads to the nearest railway station, so money came to me; not in large sums at first, for preparations had not yet been perfected for taking out the ice in great quantities, but enough to enable me to go on with my work as rapidly as I could plan it. I set about renovating and brightening and newly furnishing my house. Whatever I thought that Agnes would like I bought and put into it. I tried to put myself in her place as I selected the paper-hangings and the materials with which to cover the furniture.

Sometimes, while thus employed selecting ornaments or useful articles for my house, and using as far as was possible the taste and judgment of another instead of my own, the idea came to me that perhaps Agnes had never heard of my miraculous good fortune. Certainly her father would not be likely to inform her, and perhaps she still thought of me, if she thought at all, as the poor young man from whom she had been obliged to part because he was poor.

But whether she knew that I was growing rich, or whether she thought I was becoming poorer and poorer, I thought only of the day when I could go to her father and tell him that I was able to take his daughter and place her in a home as beautiful as that in which she now lived, and maintain her with all the comforts and luxuries which he could give her.

One day I asked my faithful cook, who also acted as my housekeeper and general supervisor, to assist me in making out a list of china which I intended to purchase.

"Are you thinking of buying china, sir?" she asked. "We have now quite as much as we really need."

"Oh, yes," said I, "I shall get complete sets of everything that can be required for a properly furnished household."

Susan gave a little sigh. "You are spendin' a lot of money, sir, and some of it for things that a single gentleman would be likely not to care very much about; and if you was to take it into your head to travel and stay away for a year or two, there's a good many things you've bought that would look shabby when

you come back, no matter how careful I might be in dustin' 'em and keepin' 'em covered."

"But I have no idea of traveling," said I. "There's no place so pleasant as this to me."

Susan was silent for a few moments, and then she said: "I know very well why you are doing all this, and I feel it my bounden duty to say to you that there's a chance of its bein' no use. I do not speak without good reason, and I would not do it if I didn't think that it might make trouble lighter to you when it comes."

"What are you talking about, Susan; what do you mean?"

"Well, sir, this is what I mean: It was only last night that my daughter Jane was in Mr. Havelot's dining-room after dinner was over, and Mr. Havelot and a friend of his were sitting there, smoking their cigars and drinking their coffee. She went in and come out again as she was busy takin' away the dishes, and they paid no attention to her, but went on talkin' without knowing, most likely, she was there. Mr. Havelot and the gentleman were talkin' about you, and Jane she heard Mr. Havelot say as plain as anything, and she said she couldn't be mistaken, that even if your nonsensical ice-mine proved to be worth anything, he would never let his daughter marry an iceman. He spoke most disrespectful of ice-men, sir, and said that it would make him sick to have a son-in-law whose business it was to sell ice to butchers, and hotels, and grog-shops, and pork-packers, and all that sort of people, and that he would as soon have his daughter

marry the man who supplied a hotel with sausages as the one who supplied it with ice to keep those sausages from spoiling. You see, sir, Mr. Havelot lives on his property as his father did before him, and he is a very proud man, with a heart as hard and cold as that ice down under your land; and it's borne in on me very strong, sir, that it would be a bad thing for you to keep on thinkin' that you are gettin' this house all ready to bring Miss Havelot to when you have married her. For if Mr. Havelot keeps on livin', which there's every chance of his doin', it may be many a weary year before you get Miss Agnes, if you ever get her. And havin' said that, sir, I say no more, and I would not have said this much if I hadn't felt it my bounden duty to your father's son to warn him that most likely he was workin' for what he might never get, and so keep him from breakin' his heart when he found out the truth all of a sudden."

With that Susan left me, without offering any assistance in making out a list of china. This was a terrible story; but, after all, it was founded only upon servants' gossip. In this country, even proud, rich men like Mr. Havelot did not have such absurd ideas regarding the source of wealth. Money is money, and whether it is derived from the ordinary products of the earth, from which came much of Mr. Havelot's revenue, or from an extraordinary project such as my glacier spur, it truly could not matter so far as concerned the standing in society of its possessor. What utter absurdity was this which Susan had told me! If I were to go to Mr. Havelot and tell him that I

would not marry his daughter because he supplied brewers and bakers with the products of his fields, would he not consider me an idiot? I determined to pay no attention to the idle tale. But alas! determinations of that sort are often of little avail. I did pay attention to it, and my spirits drooped.

The tunnel into the glacier spur had now attained considerable length, and the ice in the interior was found to be of a much finer quality than that first met with, which was of a grayish hue and somewhat inclined to crumble. When the workmen reached a grade of ice as good as they could expect, they began to enlarge the tunnel into a chamber, and from this they proposed to extend tunnels in various directions after the fashion of a coal-mine. The ice was hauled out on sledges through the tunnel and then carried up a wooden railway to the mouth of the shaft.

It was comparatively easy to walk down the shaft and enter the tunnel, and when it happened that the men were not at work I allowed visitors to go down and view this wonderful ice-cavern. The walls of the chamber appeared semi-transparent, and the light of the candles or lanterns gave the whole scene a weird and beautiful aspect. It was almost possible to imagine one's self surrounded by limpid waters, which might at any moment rush upon him and ingulf him.

Every day or two Tom Burton came with a party of scientific visitors, and had I chosen to stop the work of taking out ice, admitted the public and charged a price for admission, I might have made almost as much money as I at that time derived from the sale

of the ice. But such a method of profit was repugnant to me.

For several days after Susan's communication to me I worked on in my various operations, endeavoring to banish from my mind the idle nonsense she had spoken of; but one of its effects upon me was to make me feel that I ought not to allow hopes so important to rest upon uncertainties. So I determined that as soon as my house and grounds should be in a condition with which I should for the time be satisfied, I would go boldly to Mr. Havelot, and, casting out of my recollection everything that Susan had said, invite him to visit me and see for himself the results of the discovery of which he had spoken with such derisive contempt. This would be a straightforward and business-like answer to his foolish objections to me, and I believed that in his heart the old gentleman would properly appreciate my action.

About this time there came to my place Aaron Boyce, an elderly farmer of the neighborhood, and, finding me outside, he seized the opportunity to have a chat with me.

"I tell you what it is, Mr. Cuthbert," said he, "the people in this neighborhood hasn't give you credit for what's in you. The way you have fixed up this place, and the short time you have took to do it, is enough to show us now what sort of a man you are; and I tell you, sir, we're proud of you for a neighbor. I don't believe there's another gentleman in this county of your age that could have done what you have done in so short a time. I expect now you will be thinking

of getting married and startin' housekeepin' in a regular fashion. That comes just as natural as to set hens in the spring. By the way, have you heard that old Mr. Havelot's thinkin' of goin' abroad? I didn't believe he would ever do that again, because he's gettin' pretty well on in years, but old men will do queer things as well as young ones."

"Going abroad!" I cried. "Does he intend to take his daughter with him?"

Mr. Aaron Boyce smiled grimly. He was a great old gossip, and he had already obtained the information he wanted. "Yes," he said, "I've heard it was on her account he's going. She's been kind of weakly lately, they tell me, and hasn't took to her food, and the doctors has said that what she wants is a sea voyage and a change to foreign parts."

Going abroad! Foreign parts! This was more terrible than anything I had imagined. I would go to Mr. Havelot that very evening, the only time which I would be certain to find him at home, and talk to him in a way which would be sure to bring him to his senses, if he had any. And if I should find that he had no sense of propriety or justice, no sense of his duty to his fellow-man and to his offspring, then I would begin a bold fight for Agnes, a fight which I would not give up until, with her own lips, she told me that it would be useless. I would follow her to Kentucky, to Europe, to the uttermost ends of the earth. I could do it now. The frozen deposits in my terminal moraine would furnish me with the means. I walked away and left the old farmer stand-

ing grinning. No doubt my improvements and renovations had been the subject of gossip in the neighborhood, and he had come over to see if he could find out anything definite in regard to the object of them. He had succeeded, but he had done more: he had nerved me to instantly begin the conquest of Agnes, whether by diplomacy or war.

I was so anxious to begin this conquest that I could scarcely wait for the evening to come. At the noon hour, when the ice-works were deserted, I walked down the shaft and into the ice-chamber to see what had been done since my last visit. I decided to insist that operations upon a larger scale should be immediately begun, in order that I might have plenty of money with which to carry on my contemplated campaign. Whether it was one of peace or war, I should want all the money I could get.

I took with me a lantern and went around the chamber, which was now twenty-five or thirty feet in diameter, examining the new inroads which had been made upon its walls. There was a tunnel commenced opposite the one by which the chamber was entered, but it had not been opened more than a dozen feet, and it seemed to me that the men had not been working with any very great energy. I wanted to see a continuous stream of ice-blocks from that chamber to the mouth of the shaft.

While grumbling thus I heard behind me a sudden noise like thunder and the crashing of walls, and, turning quickly, I saw that a portion of the roof of the chamber had fallen in. Nor had it ceased to fall.

As I gazed, several great masses of ice came down from above and piled themselves upon that which had already fallen.

Startled and frightened, I sprang toward the opening of the entrance tunnel; but, alas! I found that that was the point where the roof had given way, and between me and the outer world was a wall of solid ice through which it would be as impossible for me to break as if it were a barrier of rock. With the quick instinct which comes to men in danger I glanced about to see if the workmen had left their tools; but there were none. They had been taken outside. Then I stood and gazed stupidly at the mass of fallen ice, which, even as I looked upon it, was cracking and snapping, pressed down by the weight above it, and forming itself into an impervious barrier without crevice or open seam.

Then I madly shouted. But of what avail were shouts down there in the depths of the earth? I soon ceased this useless expenditure of strength, and, with my lantern in my hand, began to walk around the chamber, throwing the light upon the walls and the roof. I became impressed with the fear that the whole cavity might cave in at once and bury me here in a tomb of ice. But I saw no cracks, nor any sign of further disaster. But why think of anything more? Was not this enough? For, before that ice-barrier could be cleared away, would I not freeze to death?

I now continued to walk, not because I expected to find anything or do anything, but simply to keep

myself warm by action. As long as I could move about I believed that there was no immediate danger of succumbing to the intense cold; for, when a young man, traveling in Switzerland, I had been in the cave of a glacier, and it was not cold enough to prevent some old women from sitting there to play the zither for the sake of a few coppers from visitors. I could not expect to be able to continue walking until I should be rescued, and if I sat down, or by chance slept from exhaustion, I must perish.

The more I thought of it, the more sure I became that in any case I must perish. A man in a block of ice could have no chance of life. And Agnes! Oh, Heavens! what demon of the ice had leagued with old Havelot to shut me up in this frozen prison? For a long time I continued to walk, beat my body with my arms and stamp my feet. The instinct of life was strong within me. I would live as long as I could, and think of Agnes. When I should be frozen I could not think of her.

Sometimes I stopped and listened. I was sure I could hear noises, but I could not tell whether they were above me or not. In the centre of the ice-barrier, about four feet from the ground, was a vast block of the frozen substance which was unusually clear and seemed to have nothing on the other side of it; for through it I could see flickers of light, as though people were going about with lanterns. It was quite certain that the accident had been discovered; for, had not the thundering noise been heard by persons outside, the workmen would have seen what had hap-

pened as soon as they came into the tunnel to begin their afternoon operations.

At first I wondered why they did not set to work with a will and cut away this barrier and let me out. But there suddenly came to my mind a reason for this lack of energy which was more chilling than the glistening walls around me: Why should they suppose that I was in the ice-chamber? I was not in the habit of coming here very often, but I was in the habit of wandering off by myself at all hours of the day. This thought made me feel that I might as well lie down on the floor of this awful cave and die at once. The workmen might think it unsafe to mine any further in this part of the glacier, and begin operations at some other point. I did sit down for a moment, and then I rose involuntarily and began my weary round. Suddenly I thought of looking at my watch. It was nearly five o'clock. I had been more than four hours in that dreadful place, and I did not believe that I could continue to exercise my limbs very much longer. The lights I had seen had ceased. It was quite plain that the workmen had no idea that any one was imprisoned in the cave.

But soon after I had come to this conclusion I saw through the clear block of ice a speck of light, and it became stronger and stronger, until I believed it to be close to the other side of the block. There it remained stationary; but there seemed to be other points of light which moved about in a strange way, and near it. Now I stood by the block watching. When my feet became very cold, I stamped them; but there

I stood fascinated, for what I saw was truly surprising. A large coal of fire appeared on the other side of the block; then it suddenly vanished and was succeeded by another coal. This disappeared, and another took its place, each one seeming to come nearer and nearer to me. Again and again did these coals appear. They reached the centre of the block; they approached my side of it. At last one was so near to me that I thought it was about to break through, but it vanished. Then there came a few quick thuds and the end of a piece of iron protruded from the block. This was withdrawn, and through the aperture there came a voice which said: "Mr. Cuthbert, are you in there?" It was the voice of Agnes!

Weak and cold as I was, fire and energy rushed through me at these words. "Yes," I exclaimed, my mouth to the hole; "Agnes, is that you?"

"Wait a minute," came from the other side of the aperture. "I must make it bigger. I must keep it from closing up."

Again came the coals of fire, running backward and forward through the long hole in the block of ice. I could see now what they were. They were irons used by plumbers for melting solder and that sort of thing, and Agnes was probably heating them in a little furnace outside, and withdrawing them as fast as they cooled. It was not long before the aperture was very much enlarged; and then there came grating through it a long tin tube nearly two inches in diameter, which almost, but not quite, reached my side of the block.

Now came again the voice of Agnes: "Oh, Mr.

Cuthbert, are you truly there? Are you crushed? Are you wounded? Are you nearly frozen? Are you starved? Tell me quickly if you are yet safe."

Had I stood in a palace padded with the softest silk and filled with spicy odors from a thousand rose gardens, I could not have been better satisfied with my surroundings than I was at that moment. Agnes was not two feet away! She was telling me that she cared for me! In a very few words I assured her that I was uninjured. Then I was on the point of telling her I loved her, for I believed that not a moment should be lost in making this avowal. I could not die without her knowing that. But the appearance of a mass of paper at the other end of the tube prevented the expression of my sentiments. This was slowly pushed on until I could reach it. Then there came the words: "Mr. Cuthbert, these are sandwiches. Eat them immediately and walk about while you are doing it. You must keep yourself warm until the men get to you."

Obedient to the slightest wish of this dear creature, I went twice around the cave, devouring the sandwiches as I walked. They were the most delicious food that I had ever tasted. They were given to me by Agnes. I came back to the opening. I could not immediately begin my avowal. I must ask a question first. "Can they get to me?" I inquired. "Is anybody trying to do that? Are they working there by you? I do not hear them at all."

"Oh, no," she answered; "they are not working here. They are on top of the bluff, trying to dig down to you. They were afraid to meddle with the

ice here for fear that more of it might come down and crush you and the men, too. Oh, there has been a dreadful excitement since it was found that you were in there!"

"How could they know I was here?" I asked.

"It was your old Susan who first thought of it. She saw you walking toward the shaft about noon, and then she remembered that she had not seen you again; and when they came into the tunnel here they found one of the lanterns gone and the big stick you generally carry lying where the lantern had been. Then it was known that you must be inside. Oh, then there was an awful time! The foreman of the ice-men examined everything, and said they must dig down to you from above. He put his men to work; but they could do very little, for they had hardly any spades. Then they sent into town for help and over to the new park for the Italians working there. From the way these men set to work you might have thought that they would dig away the whole bluff in about five minutes; but they didn't. Nobody seemed to know what to do, or how to get to work; and the hole they made when they did begin was filled up with men almost as fast as they threw out the stones and gravel. I don't believe anything would have been done properly if your friend, Mr. Burton, hadn't happened to come with two scientific gentlemen, and since that he has been directing everything. You can't think what a splendid fellow he is! I fairly adored him when I saw him giving his orders and making everybody skip around in the right way."

"Tom is a very good man," said I; "but it is his business to direct that sort of work, and it is not surprising that he knows how to do it. But, Agnes, they may never get down to me, and we do not know that this roof may not cave in upon me at any moment; and before this or anything else happens I want to tell you—"

"Mr. Cuthbert," said Agnes, "is there plenty of oil in your lantern? It would be dreadful if it were to go out and leave you there in the dark. I thought of that and brought you a little bottle of kerosene so that you can fill it. I am going to push the bottle through now, if you please." And with this a large phial, cork end foremost, came slowly through the tube, propelled by one of the soldering irons. Then came Agnes's voice: "Please fill your lantern immediately, because if it goes out you can not find it in the dark; and then walk several times around the cave, for you have been standing still too long already."

I obeyed these injunctions, but in two or three minutes was again at the end of the tube. "Agnes," said I, "how did you happen to come here? Did you contrive in your own mind this method of communicating with me?"

"Oh, yes; I did," she said. "Everybody said that this mass of ice must not be meddled with, but I knew very well it would not hurt it to make a hole through it."

"But how did you happen to be here?" I asked.

"Oh, I ran over as soon as I heard of the accident.

Everybody ran here. The whole neighborhood is on top of the bluff; but nobody wanted to come into the tunnel, because they were afraid that more of it might fall in. So I was able to work here all by myself, and I am very glad of it. I saw the soldering iron and the little furnace outside of your house where the plumbers had been using them, and I brought them here myself. Then I thought that a simple hole through the ice might soon freeze up again, and if you were alive inside I could not do anything to help you; and so I ran home and got my diploma case, that had had one end melted out of it, and I brought that to stick in the hole. I'm so glad that it is long enough, or almost."

"Oh, Agnes," I cried, "you thought of all this for me?"

"Why, of course, Mr. Cuthbert," she answered, before I had a chance to say anything more. "You were in great danger of perishing before the men got to you, and nobody seemed to think of any way to give you immediate relief. And don't you think that a collegiate education is a good thing for girls—at least, that it was for me?"

"Agnes," I exclaimed, "please let me speak. I want to tell you, I must tell you—"

But the voice of Agnes was clearer than mine and it overpowered my words. "Mr. Cuthbert," she said, "we can not both speak through this tube at the same time in opposite directions. I have here a bottle of water for you, but I am very much afraid it will not go through the diploma case."

"Oh, I don't want any water," I said. "I can eat ice if I am thirsty. What I want is to tell you—"

"Mr. Cuthbert," said she, "you must not eat that ice. Water that was frozen countless ages ago may be very different from the water of modern times, and might not agree with you. Don't touch it, please. I am going to push the bottle through if I can. I tried to think of everything that you might need and brought them all at once; because if I could not keep the hole open, I wanted to get them to you without losing a minute."

Now the bottle came slowly through. It was a small beer-bottle, I think, and several times I was afraid it was going to stick fast and cut off communication between me and the outer world—that is to say, between me and Agnes. But at last the cork and the neck appeared, and I pulled it through. I did not drink any of it, but immediately applied my mouth to the tube.

"Agnes," I said, "my dear Agnes, really you must not prevent me from speaking. I can not delay another minute. This is an awful position for me to be in, and as you don't seem to realize—"

"But I do realize, Mr. Cuthbert, that if you don't walk about you will certainly freeze before you can be rescued. Between every two or three words you want to take at least one turn around that place. How dreadful it would be if you were suddenly to become benumbed and stiff! Everybody is thinking of that. The best diggers that Mr. Burton had were three col-

ored men; but after they had gone down nothing like as deep as a well; they came up frightened and said they would not dig another shovelful for the whole world. Perhaps you don't know it, but there's a story about the neighborhood that the negro hell is under your property. You know many of the colored people expect to be everlastingly punished with ice and not with fire—"

"Agnes," I interrupted, "I am punished with ice and fire both. Please let me tell you—"

"I was going on to say, Mr. Cuthbert," she interrupted, "that when the Italians heard why the colored men had come out of the hole they would not go in either, for they are just as afraid of everlasting ice as the negroes are, and were sure that if the bottom came out of that hole they would fall into a frozen lower world. So there was nothing to do but to send for paupers, and they are working now. You know paupers have to do what they are told without regard to their beliefs. They got a dozen of them from the poorhouse. Somebody said they just threw them into the hole. Now I must stop talking, for it is time for you to walk around again. Would you like another sandwich?"

"Agnes," said I, endeavoring to speak calmly, "all I want is to be able to tell you—"

"And when you walk, Mr. Cuthbert, you had better keep around the edge of the chamber, for there is no knowing when they may come through. Mr. Burton and the foreman of the ice-men measured the bluff so that they say the hole they are making is exactly over

the middle of the chamber you are in, and if you walk around the edge the pieces may not fall on you."

"If you don't listen to me, Agnes," I said, "I'll go and sit anywhere, everywhere, where death may come to me quickest. Your coldness is worse than the coldness of the cave. I can not bear it."

"But, Mr. Cuthbert," said Agnes, speaking, I thought, with some agitation, "I have been listening to you, and what more can you possibly have to say? If there is anything you want, let me know. I will run and get it for you."

"There is no need that you should go away to get what I want," I said. "It is there with you. It is you."

"Mr. Cuthbert," said Agnes, in a very low voice, but so distinctly that I could hear every word, "don't you think it would be better for you to give your whole mind to keeping yourself warm and strong? For if you let yourself get benumbed you may sink down and freeze."

"Agnes," I said, "I will not move from this little hole until I have told you that I love you, that I have no reason to care for life or rescue unless you return my love, unless you are willing to be mine. Speak quickly to me, Agnes, because I may not be rescued and may never know whether my love for you is returned or not."

At this moment there was a tremendous crash behind me, and, turning, I saw a mass of broken ice upon the floor of the cave, with a cloud of dust and smaller fragments still falling. And then with a great

scratching and scraping, and a howl loud enough to waken the echoes of all the lower regions, down came a red-headed, drunken shoemaker. I can not say that he was drunk at that moment, but I knew the man the moment I saw his carroty poll, and it was drink which had sent him to the poorhouse.

But the sprawling and howling cobbler did not reach the floor. A rope had been fastened around his waist to prevent a fall in case the bottom of the pit should suddenly give way, and he hung dangling in mid air with white face and distended eyes, cursing and swearing and vociferously entreating to be pulled up. But before he received any answer from above, or I could speak to him, there came through the hole in the roof of the cave a shower of stones and gravel, and with them a frantic Italian, his legs and arms outspread, his face wild with terror.

Just as he appeared in view he grasped the rope of the cobbler, and, though in a moment he came down heavily upon the floor of the chamber, this broke his fall, and he did not appear to be hurt. Instantly he crouched low and almost upon all fours, and began to run around the chamber, keeping close to the walls and screaming, I suppose to his saints, to preserve him from the torments of the frozen damned.

In the midst of this hubbub came the voice of Agnes through the hole: "Oh, Mr. Cuthbert, what has happened? Are you alive?"

I was so disappointed by the appearance of these wretched interlopers at the moment it was about to be decided whether my life—should it last for years, or

but for a few minutes—was to be black or bright, and I was so shaken and startled by the manner of their entry upon the scene, that I could not immediately shape the words necessary to inform Agnes what had happened. But, collecting my faculties, I was about to speak, when suddenly, with the force of the hind leg of a mule, I was pushed away from the aperture, and the demoniac Italian clapped his great mouth to the end of the tube and roared through it a volume of oaths and supplications. I attempted to thrust aside the wretched being, but I might as well have tried to move the ice barrier itself. He had perceived that some one outside was talking to me, and in his frenzy he was imploring that some one should let him out.

While still endeavoring to move the man, I was seized by the arm, and turning, beheld the pallid face of the shoemaker. They had let him down so that he reached the floor. He tried to fall on his knees before me, but the rope was so short that he was able to go only part of the way down, and presented a most ludicrous appearance, with his toes scraping the icy floor and his arms thrown out as if he were paddling like a tadpole. "Oh, have mercy upon me, sir," he said, "and help me get out of this dreadful place. If you go to the hole and call up it's you, they will pull me up; but if they get you out first they will never think of me. I am a poor pauper, sir, but I never did nothin' to be packed in ice before I am dead."

Noticing that the Italian had left the end of the aperture in the block of ice, and that he was now shouting up the open shaft, I ran to the channel of

communication which my Agnes had opened for me, and called through it; but the dear girl had gone.

The end of a ladder now appeared at the opening in the roof, and this was let down until it reached the floor. I started toward it, but before I had gone half the distance the frightened shoemaker and the maniac Italian sprang upon it, and, with shrieks and oaths, began a maddening fight for possession of the ladder. They might quickly have gone up one after the other, but each had no thought but to be first; and as one seized the rounds he was pulled away by the other, until I feared the ladder would be torn to pieces. The shoemaker finally pushed his way up a little distance, when the Italian sprang upon his back, endeavoring to climb over him; and so on they went up the shaft, fighting, swearing, kicking, scratching, shaking and wrenching the ladder, which had been tied to another one in order to increase its length, so that it was in danger of breaking, and tearing at each other in a fashion which made it wonderful that they did not both tumble headlong downward. They went on up, so completely filling the shaft with their struggling forms and their wild cries that I could not see or hear anything, and was afraid, in fact, to look up toward the outer air.

As I was afterward informed, the Italian, who had slipped into the hole by accident, ran away like a frightened hare the moment he got his feet on firm ground, and the shoemaker sat down and swooned. By this performance he obtained from a benevolent bystander a drink of whiskey, the first he had had since he was committed to the poorhouse.

But a voice soon came down the shaft calling to me. I recognized it as that of Tom Burton, and replied that I was safe, and that I was coming up the ladder. But in my attempt to climb, I found that I was unable to do so. Chilled and stiffened by the cold and weakened by fatigue and excitement, I believe I never should have been able to leave that ice chamber if my faithful friend had not come down the ladder and vigorously assisted me to reach the outer air.

Seated on the ground, my back against a great oak tree, I was quickly surrounded by a crowd of my neighbors, the workmen and the people who had been drawn to the spot by the news of the strange accident, to gaze at me as if I were some unknown being excavated from the bowels of the earth. I was sipping some brandy and water which Burton had handed me, when Aaron Boyce pushed himself in front of me.

"Well, sir," he said, "I am mighty glad you got out of that scrape. I'm bound to say I didn't expect you would. I have been sure all along that it wasn't right to meddle with things that go agin Nature, and I haven't any doubt that you'll see that for yourself and fill up all them tunnels and shafts you've made. The ice that comes on ponds and rivers was good enough for our forefathers, and it ought to be good enough for us. And as for this cold stuff you find in your gravel-pit, I don't believe it's ice at all; and if it is, like as not it's made of some sort of pizen stuff that freezes easier than water. For everybody knows that water don't freeze in a well, and if it don't do that, why should it do it in any kind of a hole in the ground?

So perhaps it's just as well that you did git shut up there, sir, and find out for yourself what a dangerous thing it is to fool with Nature and try to git ice from the bottom of the ground instead of the top of the water."

This speech made me angry, for I knew that old Boyce was a man who was always glad to get hold of anything which had gone wrong and try to make it worse; but I was too weak to answer him.

This, however, would not have been necessary, for Tom Burton turned upon him. "Idiot," said he, "if that is your way of thinking you might as well say that if a well caves in you should never again dig for water, or that nobody should have a cellar under his house for fear that the house should fall into it. There's no more danger of the ice beneath us ever giving way again than there is that this bluff should crumble under our feet. That break in the roof of the ice tunnel was caused by my digging away the face of the bluff very near that spot. The high temperature of the outer air weakened the ice, and it fell. But down here, under this ground and secure from the influences of the heat of the outer air, the mass of ice is more solid than rock. We will build a brick arch over the place where the accident happened, and then there will not be a safer mine on this continent than this ice-mine will be."

This was a wise and diplomatic speech from Burton, and it proved to be of great service to me; for the men who had been taking out ice had been a good deal frightened by the fall of the tunnel, and when it was

proved that what Burton had said in regard to the cause of the weakening of the ice was entirely correct, they became willing to go to work again.

I now began to feel stronger and better, and, rising to my feet, I glanced here and there into the crowd, hoping to catch a sight of Agnes. But I was not very much surprised at not seeing her, because she would naturally shrink from forcing herself into the midst of this motley company; but I felt that I must go and look for her without the loss of a minute, for if she should return to her father's house I might not be able to see her again.

On the outskirts of the crowd I met Susan, who was almost overpowered with joy at seeing me safe again. I shook her by the hand, but, without replying to her warm-hearted protestations of thankfulness and delight, I asked her if she had seen Miss Havelot.

"Miss Agnes!" she exclaimed. "Why, no, sir; I expect she's at home; and if she did come here with the rest of the neighbors I didn't see her; for when I found out what had happened, sir, I was so weak that I sat down in the kitchen all of a lump, and have just had strength enough to come out."

"Oh, I know she was here," I cried; "I am sure of that, and I do hope she's not gone home again."

"Know she was here!" exclaimed Susan. "Why, how on earth could you know that?"

I did not reply that it was not on the earth but under it, that I became aware of the fact, but hurried toward the Havelot house, hoping to overtake Agnes if she had gone that way. But I did not see her, and

suddenly a startling idea struck me, and I turned and ran home as fast as I could go. When I reached my grounds I went directly to the mouth of the shaft. There was nobody there, for the crowd was collected into a solid mass on the top of the bluff, listening to a lecture from Tom Burton, who deemed it well to promote the growth of interest and healthy opinion in regard to his wonderful discovery and my valuable possession. I hurried down the shaft, and near the end of it, just before it joined the ice tunnel, I beheld Agnes sitting upon the wooden track. She was not unconscious, for as I approached she slightly turned her head. I sprang toward her; I kneeled beside her; I took her in my arms. "Oh, Agnes, dearest Agnes," I cried, "what is the matter? What has happened to you? Has a piece of ice fallen upon you? Have you slipped and hurt yourself?"

She turned her beautiful eyes up toward me and for a moment did not speak. Then she said: "And they got you out? And you are in your right mind?"

"Right mind!" I exclaimed. "I have never been out of my mind. What are you thinking of?"

"Oh, you must have been," she said, "when you screamed at me in that horrible way. I was so frightened that I fell back, and I must have fainted."

Tremulous as I was with love and anxiety, I could not help laughing. "Oh, my dear Agnes, I did not scream at you. That was a crazed Italian who fell through the hole that they dug." Then I told her what had happened.

She heaved a gentle sigh. "I am so glad to hear

that," she said. "There was one thing that I was thinking about just before you came and which gave me a little bit of comfort; the words and yells I heard were dreadfully oniony, and somehow or other I could not connect that sort of thing with you."

It now struck me that during this conversation I had been holding my dear girl in my arms, and she had not shown the slightest sign of resistance or disapprobation. This made my heart beat high. "Oh, Agnes," I said, "I truly believe you love me or you would not have been here, you would not have done for me all that you did. Why did you not answer me when I spoke to you through that wall of ice, through the hole your dear love had made in it? Why, when I was in such a terrible situation, not knowing whether I was to die or live, did you not comfort my heart with one sweet word?"

"Oh, Walter," she answered, "it wasn't at all necessary for you to say all that you did say, for I had suspected it before, and as soon as you began to call me Agnes I knew, of course, how you felt about it. And, besides, it really was necessary that you should move about to keep yourself from freezing. But the great reason for my not encouraging you to go on talking in that way was that I was afraid people might come into the tunnel, and as, of course, you would not know that they were there, you would go on making love to me through my diploma case, and you know I should have perished with shame if I had had to stand there with that old Mr. Boyce, and I don't know who else, listening to your words, which were very sweet to me,

Walter, but which would have sounded awfully funny to them."

When she said that my words had been sweet to her I dropped the consideration of all other subjects.

When, about ten minutes afterward, we came out of the shaft we were met by Susan.

"Bless my soul and body, Mr. Cuthbert!" she exclaimed. "Did you find that young lady down there in the centre of the earth? It seems to me as if everything that you want comes to you out of the ground. But I have been looking for you to tell you that Mr. Havelot has been here after his daughter, and I'm sure if he had known where she was, he would have been scared out of his wits."

"Father here!" exclaimed Agnes. "Where is he now?"

"I think he has gone home, miss. Indeed I'm sure of it; for my daughter Jennie, who was over here the same as all the other people in the county, I truly believe told him—and I was proud she had the spirit to speak up that way to him—that your heart was almost broke when you heard about Mr. Cuthbert being shut up in the ice, and that most likely you was in your own room a-cryin' your eyes out. When he heard that he stood lookin' all around the place, and he asked me if he might go in the house; and when I told him he was most welcome, he went in. I offered to show him about, which he said was no use, that he had been there often enough; and he went everywhere, I truly believe, except in the garret and the cellar.

And after he got through with that he went out to the barn and then walked home."

"I must go to him immediately," said Agnes.

"But not alone," said I. And together we walked through the woods, over the little field and across the Havelot lawn to the house. We were told that the old gentleman was in his library, and together we entered the room.

Mr. Havelot was sitting by a table on which were lying several open volumes of an encyclopedia. When he turned and saw us, he closed his book, pushed back his chair and took off his spectacles. "Upon my word, sir," he cried; "and so the first thing you do after they pull you out of the earth is to come here and break my commands."

"I came on the invitation of your daughter, sir."

"And what right has she to invite you, I'd like to know?"

"She has every right, for to her I owe my existence."

"What rabid nonsense!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "People don't owe their existence to the silly creatures they fall in love with."

"I assure you I am correct, sir." And then I related to him what his daughter had done, and how through her angelic agency my rescuers had found me a living being instead of a frozen corpse.

"Stuff!" said Mr. Havelot. "People can live in a temperature of thirty-two degrees above zero all winter. Out in Minnesota they think that's hot. And you gave him victuals and drink through your diploma

case! Well, miss, I told you that if you tried to roast chestnuts in that diploma case the bottom would come out."

"But you see, father," said Agnes, earnestly, "the reason I did that was because when I roasted them in anything shallow they popped into the fire, but they could not jump out of the diploma case."

"Well, something else seems to have jumped out of it," said the old gentleman, "and something with which I am not satisfied. I have been looking over these books, sir, and have read the articles on ice, glaciers and caves, and I find no record of anything in the whole history of the world which in the least resembles the cock-and-bull story I am told about the butt-end of a glacier which tumbled into a cave in your ground, and has been lying there through all the geological ages, and the eras of formation, and periods of animate existence down to the days of Noah, and Moses and Methuselah, and Rameses II, and Alexander the Great, and Martin Luther, and John Wesley, to this day, for you to dig out and sell to the Williamstown Ice Company."

"But that's what happened, sir," said I.

"And besides, father," added Agnes, "the gold and silver that people take out of mines may have been in the ground as long as that ice has been."

"Bosh!" said Mr. Havelot. "The cases are not at all similar. It is simply impossible that a piece of a glacier should have fallen into a cave and been preserved in that way. The temperature of caves is al-

ways above the freezing-point, and that ice would have melted a million years before you were born."

"But, father," said Agnes, "the temperature of caves filled with ice must be very much lower than that of common caves."

"And apart from that," I added, "the ice is still there, sir."

"That doesn't make the slightest difference," he replied. "It's against all reason and common-sense that such a thing could have happened. Even if there ever was a glacier in this part of the country and if the lower portion of it did stick out over an immense hole in the ground, that protruding end would never have broken off and tumbled in. Glaciers are too thick and massive for that."

"But the glacier is there, sir," said I, "in spite of your own reasoning."

"And then again," continued the old gentleman, "if there had been a cave and a projecting spur the ice would have gradually melted and dripped into the cave, and we would have had a lake and not an ice-mine. It is a perfect absurdity."

"But it's there, notwithstanding," said I.

"And you can not subvert facts, you know, father," added Agnes.

"Confound facts!" he cried. "I base my arguments on sober, cool-headed reason; and there's nothing that can withstand reason. The thing's impossible and, therefore it has never happened. I went over to your place, sir, when I heard of the accident, for the misfortunes of my neighbors interest me, no matter what

may be my opinion of them, and when I found that you had been extricated from your ridiculous predicament, I went through your house, and I was pleased to find it in as good or better condition than I had known it in the days of your respected father. I was glad to see the improvement in your circumstances; but when I am told, sir, that your apparent prosperity rests upon such an absurdity as a glacier in a gravel hill, I can but smile with contempt, sir."

I was getting a little tired of this. "But the glacier is there, sir," I said, "and I am taking out ice every day, and have reason to believe that I can continue to take it out for the rest of my life. With such facts as these before me, I am bound to say, sir, that I don't care in the least about reason."

"And I am here, father," said Agnes, coming close to me, "and here I want to continue for the rest of my days."

The old gentleman looked at her. "And, I suppose," he said, "that you, too, don't in the least care about reason?"

"Not a bit," said Agnes.

"Well," said Mr. Havelot, rising, "I have done all I can to make you two listen to reason, and I can do no more. I despair of making sensible human beings of you, and so you might as well go on acting like a couple of ninny-hammers."

"Do ninny-hammers marry and settle on the property adjoining yours, sir?" I asked.

"Yes, I suppose they do," he said "And when the aboriginal ice-house, or whatever the ridiculous

thing is that they have discovered, gives out, I suppose that they can come to a reasonable man and ask him for a little money to buy bread and butter."

Two years have passed, and Agnes and the glacier are still mine; great blocks of ice now flow in almost a continuous stream from the mine to the railroad station, and in a smaller but quite as continuous stream an income flows in upon Agnes and me; and from one of the experimental excavations made by Tom Burton on the bluff comes a stream of ice-cold water running in a sparkling brook a-down my dell. On fine mornings before I am up, I am credibly informed that Aaron Boyce may generally be found, in season and out of season, endeavoring to catch the trout with which I am trying to stock that ice-cold stream. The diploma case, which I caused to be carefully removed from the ice-barrier which had imprisoned me, now hangs in my study and holds our marriage certificate.

Near the line-fence which separates his property from mine, Mr. Havelot has sunk a wide shaft. "If the glacier spur under your land was a quarter of a mile wide," he says to me, "it was probably at least a half a mile long; and if that were the case, the upper end of it extends into my place, and I may be able to strike it." He has a good deal of money, this worthy Mr. Havelot, but he would be very glad to increase his riches, whether they are based upon sound reason or ridiculous facts. As for Agnes and myself, no facts or any reason could make us happier than our ardent love and our frigid fortune.

THE INDIAN'S HAND

BY LORIMER STODDARD

Lorimer Stoddard, the gifted son of that gifted couple, Richard Henry and Elizabeth Stoddard, was born in New York City in 1863, and died in 1901. He was best known as a playwright. He wrote "Napoleon" for Richard Mansfield, and dramatized "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," Thomas Hardy's novel, for Mrs. Fiske, and "In the Palace of the King," F. Marion Crawford's novel, for Viola Allen. Mr. Stoddard also wrote a number of short stories remarkable for intense dramatic situation. Of these the present selection is thoroughly representative.

THE INDIAN'S HAND

BY LORIMER STODDARD

THE men had driven away. Their carts and horses disappeared behind the roll of the low hills. They appeared now and then, like boats on the crest of a wave, further each time. And their laughter and singing and shouts grew fainter as the bushes hid them from sight.

The women and children remained, with two old men to protect them. They might have gone too, the hunters said. "What harm could come in the broad daylight?—the bears and panthers were far away. They'd be back by night, with only two carts to fill."

Then Jim, the crack shot of the settlement, said, "We'll drive home the bears in the carts."

The children shouted and danced as they thought of the sport to come, of the hunters' return with their game, of the bonfires they always built.

One pale woman clung to her husband's arm. "But the Indians!" she said.

That made the men all laugh. "Indians!" they cried; "why, there've been none here for twenty years! We drove them away, down there"—pointing across the plain—"to a hotter place than this, where the sand burns their feet and they ride for days for water."

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The pale woman murmured, "Ah, but they returned."

"Yes," cried her big husband, whose brown beard covered his chest, "and burned two cabins. Small harm they did, the curs!"

"Hush," said the pale woman, pressing her husband's arm; and the men around were quiet, pretending to fix their saddles, as they glanced at another woman, dressed in black, who turned and went into her house.

"I forgot her boy," said the bearded man, as he gravely picked up his gun.

They started off in the morning cool, toward the mountains where the trees grew. And the long shadows lessened as the sun crept up the sky.

The woman in black stood silent by her door. No one bade her good-by. The other women went back to their houses to work. The children played in the dust; clouds rose as they shouted and ran. A day's freedom lay before them.

But the woman in black still stood by her door, like a spectre in the sunshine, her thin hands clasped together as she gazed away over the plain toward Mexico.

Her face was parched and drawn, as if the sun from the sand had burned into the bone. Her eyes alone seemed to live; they were hard and bright.

Her house was a little away from the rest, on the crest of a hill facing the desert plain.

She had heard the words of the bearded man: "Small harm the Indians did." Had he forgotten her boy? How could he forget, while she was there to

remind them of the dead? Near her house was a small rock roughly marked. The rude letters "Will, gone, '69," she had cut on it with her own hands. It marked the last place where her boy had played. She remembered how she went away softly—so he should not cry to follow her—without a word, without a kiss.

Here her hands beat the side of the house.

"Oh, to have that kiss now and die!" But she had gone, unthinking, up the road where the pale woman lived, then a rosy-cheeked happy bride, not a widow like herself. They laughed and discussed the newcomers at the settlement. It was a holiday, for the men were away over the hills, cutting down trees to build their houses with.

As they talked there idly, they heard what they thought was the shrill bark of dogs running up the hill. Startled, they went to the window. Round the curve of the road came horses wildly galloping, and upon their backs— Here the pale woman shrieked and fled. They were Indians, beating their horses with their bare legs, their black hair streaming in the wind.

Like a flash, she had bolted the door and barred the shutters as they galloped up. She turned then. Through the open back door she saw the women run screaming up the hill, their children in their arms.

Their children! Where was hers? She stopped as if turned to stone, then undid the door.

They dragged her out by the wrists, by the hair. She fought with them stronger than ten men. But there were twenty; she was alone. The little street was empty. They strangled her, beat down her face,

dragged her upon a horse, and, with her crosswise on the saddle, galloped up and down, as they fired the cabins and the sheds. Her hands were shackled, and her eyes blind with blood, but she thought only of her child. "Where could he be?"

There were gunshots. Down the hills like mad came the white men for their wives and children.

Then the Indians turned back toward the plain. They rode past her house.

There, where she had left him, stood the child, dazed with surprise. She held out her arms tied together and called to him to come.

"Fool! fool!" Here the woman in black struck her temples with her hands. "Fool!" Why had she not galloped by and never noticed him?

But she begged, caught at the horse's head, struggled to get to him; and the Indian stopped for a moment in his flight and caught up the child and went on.

Then the thought came to her of the end of that ride —what was to come—after. And she tried to drop the boy, to let him slide gently to the ground; but the Indian held them fast.

Behind, nearer, came the following men, louder the guns. The horse she was on snorted, staggered under the weight of the three, and as they reached the plain the child was torn from her, she was pushed away. But she rose and staggered after them amid the blinding dust. They must take her too. Sobbing, she called to them as she stumbled on. Many times she fell. Then she could go no more.

That was all. Her story ended there, with the thundering of horses' hoofs and the taste of dust in her mouth. They found her there unconscious. Her friends tended her. When she came back to life she asked no questions but left her neighbor's house and came to her door, where she was standing now, and gazed away over the sand where *he* had gone, down toward Mexico.

The years went by, and she was still alone in the house where *two* should have been. And now far off she saw the dust blowing in a long, rolling, pinkish line. But the dust blew so often, and nothing came of it—not even the Indians.

The boy she knew was dead, but they—his murderers—remained, somewhere.

If she could have one now in her power!

The woman in black pondered, as she had so many times, how she should torture him. No pain could be too horrible. She looked at the fire in the stove, and piled on the logs—the logs that were brought with such trouble from the mountains where the trees grew. She could not make it hot enough. She dropped on her knees and watched the iron grow red. And the letters of the maker's name stamped on it grew distinct, and the word "Congress," half defaced, and the figures "64." Ah, those letters! she could have kissed the spot, for her child had touched it. Charmed by the glow, when left alone, he laid his baby hand flat on it, and burned deep into the palm where those letters, "S S, 64."

She would know him among a million by that mark.

But he was dead. The Indians remained.

The woman in black stood up. Why should she not go to them? There were pools in the plain where she could drink. That would be enough.

The men were away; the women were at work. Who could stop her?

She put on her bonnet and started off down the hill through the green bushes. The air was still crisp, though the sun was hot.

The desert must have an end. She would keep on to Mexico. She walked quickly, and her dress grew gray with dust, and the air scorching, as she reached the plain. But she kept on, and only looked back once at the house on the hill, and at the window where the pale woman sat.

The dust choked her, and she stumbled, and the sole of one shoe came half off, and slapped, and banged, and delayed her as she walked. She tore it off and went on, but the sand cut and burned her so that she sat down and wept, and wanted to go back for her other pair, the ones she wore on Sundays. The hill, though, looked so distant that she wearily got up and went on, on, till she could go no more, and crept under the shadow of a rock. There was no water near. Her throat was parched, and her temples beat wildly. She must go back and start again, strengthened, fortified. She would start to-morrow, or at night, when the cool would let her get too far to return.

By slow degrees she dragged herself up the hill. The pale woman came out of her house, and nodded, but the woman in black did not smile in return. She

closed her door, and went up to her bed, and fell on it, and slept, amid the buzzing of the flies and the fitful flapping of the window-shade in the breeze.

The pale woman sighed and glanced across the plain. The roll of blowing dust was larger, and more regular, and nearer. The woman shuddered as she watched it creep slowly along behind the sand mounds. "It always blows," she said to herself, "but not like that, so steadily, so even." She strained her eyes, but there was only dust to be seen. Then she thought of a telescope that belonged to the minister's wife, who came from a seaport town, and ran to fetch it. The two women came out with it together, the minister's wife laughing at her friend, she was such a timid thing!

But the pale woman was paler than ever, and trembled so she could not steady it. The laughing one looked through it, and laughed no more.

"I see a head over the mound there," she said.

The pale woman shrieked.

"They are miles away. We may have time."

"For what?"

"To get away."

"They may be friends—"

"They are Indians! White men would not live through that sand. We must go to the woods. Help me. Warn the women. Gather the children. Come."

She rushed into her house. The other still stood and looked.

The dust cloud was a little nearer. In a moment all was wild confusion, names were called, but not

loudly, girls sobbed, some carried their little treasures, mothers held their children. All gathered together, hidden from the plain by a house.

The pale woman led out her father, then ran to her neighbor's door. She opened it, and called clearly, but softly, "Mary, Mary," There was no answer. The woman in black, on her bed, slept on. Her neighbor hesitated, then hurried after the others, as they ran up the low hills toward the mountains, where their men had gone.

The dust cloud grew nearer. Now and then a head could be seen. But all was as still as the grave. The woman in black slept heavily and dreamed that revenge had come at last—that in her hand she held an Indian's head.

The window-shade flapped loudly, and she woke with an apprehension crushing her. She went to the window and looked out. There was no blowing dust upon the plains, and the street was empty. The doors of the houses stood open; a shawl lay in the middle of the road. The woman leaned out and looked toward the woods.

She saw on the crest of a hill the white skirts of the flying women, and then, below, down the road, her ears sharpened, her heart tightening, she heard the soft, regular thumping of horses' feet.

Then she *knew*.

She sat on the edge of the bed. This was what she had waited for! Was it her turn now?—or theirs again?

She could kill *one*.

Where was her gun?

She had loaned it to the men.

But her axe—that was below.

As she started for it, there was a burst of war cries.

She ran down the narrow stairs, and took the axe from its place on the wall.

They were passing her door. The room grew lighter. She turned. One stood in the open doorway, black against the sunshine. She set her teeth hard, hid the axe behind her skirts, watched him motionless.

He stretched out his hand clawlike, and laughed, his eyes gleaming, as catlike he moved nearer. A terror seized her: with a hoarse cry, she sprang up the stairs, flinging down a chair as he followed panting.

Quickly she climbed up the ladder to the loft, threw down the trapdoor, fell on it, bolted it, waited. All was still. Outside she heard the distant yells. She stooped noiselessly and put her ear upon the floor. There was soft breathing underneath, and through a crack in the floor she saw an eye peering up at her.

She stood a long time, motionless, axe in hand, ready.

Her back was to the bolt, but suddenly she *felt* that there was something there. She turned softly. A slim brown hand was almost through a crevice in the floor.

She raised her axe. The slender fingers touched the bolt and gently drew it back.

Then with the force of all her hatred fell the axe

upon the wrist. The hand sprang up at her. With a howl of agony the creature fell bumping beneath.

Then all again was still.

Her face was wet and warm with the spattered blood.

Outside she heard the crackling of a burning house, then gunshots far away, and distant shouts. On tiptoe she went to the garret window, and peeped round its edge. Over the hills, quite near, she saw the men returning. One house was blazing—the minister's. The Indians were retreating. Near her door, grazing, stood a riderless horse. *She* knew its owner. As they rode past, they caught at it, but were stopped by a shout from her door. An Indian rushed out, handsome, young, holding aloft a bare right arm without a hand. In his language he shrieked to them for revenge, pointing up with his red wrist to the attic where she stood.

The eyes of the woman shot fire. She leaned far out and shook her fist from the garret window.

"One Indian at least!"

She hurled the axe at them. It fell far short. They fired as they passed, but none hit her. Nearer came the men.

The wounded man leaped to his horse and with a curse rode on. The woman laughed as he passed beneath, then sat down in the dusky loft with a red pool at her feet.

Shortly the men returned. Some went by down the hill, after the Indians. Others put out the fire. All was confusion, bustle, shouts.

Then the women and the children came and added to the din, and the men who had followed returned. But the woman in black sat alone in the loft, till she heard the crowd at her door below, and the voice of the pale woman say:

"Where is Mary?"

She rose and lifted the trap-door—it was unbolted—and went down.

The pale woman came to her, but she pushed her aside, and wiped her face with her sleeve.

"Are they killed? any of them?" she said. Her friend answered, "No, Mary, not one." "No harm this time," said the bearded man. "Except my house, it is burned," said the minister's wife. "We'll soon have another."

"I don't mean *you!*" cried the woman in black. "I mean them—red devils. Have you got any?—killed any? *You*"—this to Jim, who never missed a shot—"you"—this to the bearded man—"have *you* killed any?"

And the men answered, "No."

And one man said, "Their horses were faster than ours."

"Not one!" The woman in black drew herself up proudly. "Yes, one; better than killed. Wait." The women shrunk from her as she darted up the stair. They looked at each other wonderingly. The woman returned with something in her grasp. She flung it on the table. "It is an Indian's hand. His arm will shrivel to the bone. They will leave him some day to die in the sand." The women shuddered and drew

back; the men crowded round, but they did not touch the hand.

"Are you afraid?" said the woman in black. "Afraid of that thing!"

She bent back the fingers and looked in it with a smile of contempt. Her face took an ashen hue: the hand struck the table edge and fell upon the floor. She seemed to be trying to think for a second, then she gave one awful cry, and leaned her face against the wall, with her hands hanging at her side.

The pale woman tried to go to her, but her husband drew her back, and, with a silent crowd around, slowly picked up the hand.

For a second he hesitated, then did as she had done, but gently. He bent back the fingers of the severed hand and read its history written there, "S S, 64," in white letters on the palm.

He remembered then how, twenty years ago, when she brought the child to him, he had tied its little hand in cooling salve.

It was larger now.

The whisper went around, "It is her boy's hand," and they crept toward the door.

The pale woman took a flower from her dress, one she had put there hours before, and placed it in the brown fingers on the table and went out.

The woman did not stir from the wall. "Leave the hand," she said.

"It is there," and the bearded man closed the door gently behind him.

The woman in black turned. Her hard eyes were dim now. She took the hand from the table and undid her dress and placed it in her breast, and went to the window, and watched, far off, a cloud of dust made golden by the sun, as it rolled away across the plain, down toward Mexico.

THE UPPER BERTH

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD

Mr. F. Marion Crawford (born in Italy, August 2, 1854, died in Sorrento, Italy, April 8, 1909), while the most prolific of novelists, has written few short stories. One of these, however, the present selection, is held by the critics to be a most successful tour de force *in the literature of brief terror. For about the space of the proverbial "bad quarter of an hour" the reader is gripped with a sense of mysterious dread—an effect which is produced by the author's mastery of narrative style rather than by any cleverness in central conception or ingenuity in complication and solution of situation. It will be interesting to compare this story with "The Horla," by Guy de Maupassant, and "The Damned Thing," by Ambrose Bierce.*

THE UPPER BERTH

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD

I

SOMEBODY asked for the cigars. We had talked long, and the conversation was beginning to languish; the tobacco smoke had got into the heavy curtains, the wine had got into those brains which were liable to become heavy, and it was already perfectly evident that, unless somebody did something to rouse our oppressed spirits, the meeting would soon come to its natural conclusion, and we, the guests, would speedily go home to bed, and most certainly to sleep. No one had said anything very remarkable; it may be that no one had anything very remarkable to say. Jones had given us every particular of his last hunting adventure in Yorkshire. Mr. Tompkins, of Boston, had explained at elaborate length those working principles by the due and careful maintenance of which the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fé Railroad not only extended its territory, increased its departmental influence, and transported live stock without starving them to death before the day of actual delivery, but, also, had for years succeeded in deceiving those passengers who bought its tickets into the fallacious belief that the corporation aforesaid was really able to transport human life without destroying

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it. Signor Tombola had endeavored to persuade us, by arguments which we took no trouble to oppose, that the unity of his country in no way resembled the average modern torpedo, carefully planned, constructed with all the skill of the greatest European arsenals, but, when constructed, destined to be directed by feeble hands into a region where it must undoubtedly explode, unseen, unfeared, and unheard, into the illimitable wastes of political chaos.

It is unnecessary to go into further details. The conversation had assumed proportions which would have bored Prometheus on his rock, which would have driven Tantalus to distraction, and which would have impelled Ixion to seek relaxation in the simple but instructive dialogues of Herr Ollendorff, rather than submit to the greater evil of listening to our talk. We had sat at table for hours; we were bored, we were tired, and nobody showed signs of moving.

Somebody called for cigars. We all instinctively looked toward the speaker. Brisbane was a man of five-and-thirty years of age, and remarkable for those gifts which chiefly attract the attention of men. He was a strong man. The external proportions of his figure presented nothing extraordinary to the common eye, though his size was above the average. He was a little over six feet in height, and moderately broad in the shoulder; he did not appear to be stout, but, on the other hand, he was certainly not thin; his small head was supported by a strong and sinewy neck, his broad, muscular hands appeared to possess a peculiar skill in breaking walnuts without the assistance of

the ordinary cracker, and, seeing him in profile, one could not help remarking the extraordinary breadth of his sleeves and the unusual thickness of his chest. He was one of those men who are commonly spoken of among men as deceptive; that is to say that though he looked exceedingly strong he was in reality very much stronger than he looked. Of his features I need say little. His head is small, his hair is thin, his eyes are blue, his nose is large, he has a small mustache and a square jaw. Everybody knows Brisbane, and when he asked for a cigar everybody looked at him.

"It is a very singular thing," said Brisbane.

Everybody stopped talking. Brisbane's voice was not loud, but possessed a peculiar quality of penetrating general conversation and cutting it like a knife. Everybody listened. Brisbane, perceiving that he had attracted their general attention, lighted his cigar with great equanimity.

"It is very singular," he continued, "that thing about ghosts. People are always asking whether anybody has seen a ghost. I have."

"Bosh! What, you? You don't mean to say so, Brisbane? Well, for a man of your intelligence!"

A chorus of exclamations greeted Brisbane's remarkable statement. Everybody called for cigars, and Stubbs, the butler, suddenly appeared from the depths of nowhere with a fresh bottle of dry champagne. The situation was saved; Brisbane was going to tell a story.

"I am an old sailor," said Brisbane, "and as I have to cross the Atlantic pretty often, I have my favorites.

Most men have their favorites. I have seen a man wait in a Broadway bar for three-quarters of an hour for a particular car which he liked. I believe the barkeeper made at least one-third of his living by that man's preference. I have a habit of waiting for certain ships when I am obliged to cross that duck-pond. It may be a prejudice, but I was never cheated out of a good passage but once in my life. I remember it very well; it was a warm morning in June, and the custom house officials, who were hanging about waiting for a steamer already on her way up from the quarantine, presented a peculiarly hazy and thoughtful appearance. I had not much luggage—I never have. I mingled with the crowd of passengers, porters, and officious individuals in blue coats and brass buttons, who seemed to spring up like mushrooms from the deck of a moored steamer to obtrude their unnecessary services upon the independent passenger. I have always noticed with a certain interest the spontaneous evolution of these fellows. They are not there when you arrive; five minutes after the pilot has called 'Go ahead!' they, or at least their blue coats and brass buttons, have disappeared from deck and gangway as completely as though they had been consigned to that locker which tradition unanimously ascribes to Davy Jones. But, at the moment of starting, they are there, clean-shaved, blue-coated, and ravenous for fees. I hastened on board. The 'Kamtschatka' was one of my favorite ships. I say was, because she emphatically no longer is. I can not conceive of any inducement which could entice me to

make another voyage in her. Yes, I know what you are going to say. She is uncommonly clean in the run aft, she has enough bluffing off in the bows to keep her dry, and the lower berths are most of them double. She has a lot of advantages, but I won't cross in her again. Excuse the digression. I got on board. I hailed a steward, whose red nose and redder whiskers were equally familiar to me.

" 'One hundred and five, lower berth,' said I, in the business-like tone peculiar to men who think no more of crossing the Atlantic than taking a whiskey cocktail at downtown Delmonico's.

"The steward took my portmanteau, greatcoat, and rug. I shall never forget the expression of his face. Not that he turned pale. It is maintained by the most eminent divines that even miracles can not change the course of nature. I have no hesitation in saying that he did not turn pale; but, from his expression, I judged that he was either about to shed tears, to sneeze, or to drop my portmanteau. As the latter contained two bottles of particularly fine old sherry presented to me for my voyage by my old friend Snigginson van Pickyns, I felt extremely nervous. But the steward did none of these things.

" 'Well, I'm d——d!' said he in a low voice, and led the way.

"I supposed my Hermes, as he led me to the lower regions, had had a little grog, but I said nothing, and followed him. One hundred and five was on the port side, well aft. There was nothing remarkable about the stateroom. The lower berth, like most of those

upon the 'Kamtschatka,' was double. There was plenty of room; there was the usual washing apparatus, calculated to convey an idea of luxury to the mind of a North American Indian; there were the usual inefficient racks of brown wood, in which it is more easy to hang a large-sized umbrella than the common tooth-brush of commerce. Upon the uninviting mattresses were carefully folded together those blankets which a great modern humorist has aptly compared to cold buckwheat cakes. The question of towels was left entirely to the imagination. The glass decanters were filled with a transparent liquid faintly tinged with brown, but from which an odor less faint, but not more pleasing, ascended to the nostrils, like a far-off seasick reminiscence of oily machinery. Sad-colored curtains half closed the upper berth. The hazy June daylight shed a faint illumination upon the desolate little scene. Ugh! how I hate that stateroom!

"The steward deposited my traps and looked at me as though he wanted to get away—probably in search of more passengers and more fees. It is always a good plan to start in favor with those functionaries, and I accordingly gave him certain coins there and then.

" 'I'll try and make yer comfortable all I can,' he remarked, as he put the coins in his pocket. Nevertheless, there was a doubtful intonation in his voice which surprised me. Possibly his scale of fees had gone up, and he was not satisfied; but on the whole I was inclined to think that, as he himself would have

expressed it, he was 'the better for a glass.' I was wrong, however, and did the man injustice.

II

"Nothing especially worthy of mention occurred during that day. We left the pier punctually, and it was very pleasant to be fairly under way, for the weather was warm and sultry, and the motion of the steamer produced a refreshing breeze.

"Everybody knows what the first day at sea is like. People pace the decks and stare at each other, and occasionally meet acquaintances whom they did not know to be on board. There is the usual uncertainty as to whether the food will be good, bad, or indifferent, until the first two meals have put the matter beyond a doubt; there is the usual uncertainty about the weather, until the ship is fairly off Fire Island. The tables are crowded at first, and then suddenly thinned. Pale-faced people spring from their seats and precipitate themselves toward the door, and each old sailor breathes more freely as his seasick neighbor rushes from his side, leaving him plenty of elbow room and an unlimited command over the mustard.

"One passage across the Atlantic is very much like another, and we who cross very often do not make the voyage for the sake of novelty. Whales and icebergs are indeed always objects of interest, but, after all, one whale is very much like another whale, and one rarely sees an iceberg at close quarters. To the majority of us the most delightful moment of the day on board an ocean steamer is when we have

taken our last turn on deck, have smoked our last cigar, and having succeeded in tiring ourselves, feel at liberty to turn in with a clear conscience. On that first night of the voyage I felt particularly lazy, and went to bed in one hundred and five rather earlier than I usually do. As I turned in, I was amazed to see that I was to have a companion. A portmanteau, very like my own, lay in the opposite corner, and in the upper berth had been deposited a neatly folded rug with a stick and umbrella. I had hoped to be alone, and I was disappointed; but I wondered who my roommate was to be, and I determined to have a look at him.

"Before I had been long in bed he entered. He was, as far as I could see, a very tall man, very thin, very pale, with sandy hair and whiskers and colorless gray eyes. He had about him, I thought, an air of rather dubious fashion; the sort of man you might see in Wall Street, without being able precisely to say what he was doing there—the sort of man who frequents the Café Anglais, who always seems to be alone and who drinks champagne; you might meet him on a race-course, but he would never appear to be doing anything there either. A little overdressed—a little odd. There are three or four of his kind on every ocean steamer. I made up my mind that I did not care to make his acquaintance, and I went to sleep saying to myself that I would study his habits in order to avoid him. If he rose early, I would rise late; if he went to bed late, I would go to bed early. I did not care to know him. If you once know people of that kind they are always turning up. Poor

fellow! I need not have taken the trouble to come to so many decisions about him, for I never saw him again after that first night in one hundred and five.

"I was sleeping soundly when I was suddenly waked by a loud noise. To judge from the sound, my room-mate must have sprung with a single leap from the upper berth to the floor. I heard him fumbling with the latch and bolt of the door, which opened almost immediately, and then I heard his footsteps as he ran at full speed down the passage, leaving the door open behind him. The ship was rolling a little, and I expected to hear him stumble or fall, but he ran as though he were running for his life. The door swung on its hinges with the motion of the vessel, and the sound annoyed me. I got up and shut it, and groped my way back to my berth in the darkness. I went to sleep again; but I have no idea how long I slept.

"When I awoke it was still quite dark, but I felt a disagreeable sensation of cold, and it seemed to me that the air was damp. You know that peculiar smell of a cabin which has been wet with sea water. I covered myself up as well as I could and dozed off again, framing complaints to be made the next day, and selecting the most powerful epithets in the language. I could hear my room-mate turn over in the upper berth. He had probably returned while I was asleep. Once I thought I heard him groan, and I argued that he was seasick. That is particularly unpleasant when one is below. Nevertheless I dozed off and slept till early daylight.

"The ship was rolling heavily, much more than on

the previous evening, and the gray light which came in through the porthole changed in tint with every movement according as the angle of the vessel's side turned the glass seaward or skyward. It was very cold—unaccountably so for the month of June. I turned my head and looked at the porthole, and saw to my surprise that it was wide open and hooked back. I believe I swore audibly. Then I got up and shut it. As I turned back I glanced at the upper berth. The curtains were drawn close together; my companion had probably felt cold as well as I. It struck me that I had slept enough. The stateroom was uncomfortable, though, strange to say, I could not smell the dampness which had annoyed me in the night. My room-mate was still asleep—excellent opportunity for avoiding him, so I dressed at once and went on deck. The day was warm and cloudy, with an oily smell on the water. It was seven o'clock as I came out—much later than I had imagined. I came across the doctor, who was taking his first sniff of the morning air. He was a young man from the West of Ireland—a tremendous fellow, with black hair and blue eyes, already inclined to be stout; he had a happy-go-lucky, healthy look about him which was rather attractive.

"'Fine mornin,' I remarked, by way of introduction.

"'Well,' said he, eyeing me with an air of ready interest, 'it's a fine morning and it's not a fine morning. I don't think it's much of a morning.'

"'Well, no—it is not so very fine,' said I.

"'It's just what I call fuggly weather,' replied the doctor.

"'It was very cold last night, I thought,' I remarked. 'However, when I looked about, I found that the porthole was wide open. I had not noticed it when I went to bed. And the stateroom was damp, too.'

"'Damp!' said he. 'Whereabouts are you?'

"'One hundred and five—'

"To my surprise the doctor started visibly, and stared at me.

"'What is the matter?' I asked.

"'Oh—nothing,' he answered; 'only everybody has complained of that stateroom for the last three trips.'

"'I shall complain too,' I said. 'It has certainly not been properly aired. It is a shame!'

"'I don't believe it can be helped,' answered the doctor. 'I believe there is something—well, it is not my business to frighten passengers.'

"'You need not be afraid of frightening me,' I replied. 'I can stand any amount of damp. If I should get a bad cold I will come to you.'

"I offered the doctor a cigar, which he took and examined very critically.

"'It is not so much the damp,' he remarked. 'However, I dare say you will get on very well. Have you a room-mate?'

"'Yes; a deuce of a fellow, who bolts out in the middle of the night and leaves the door open.'

"Again the doctor glanced curiously at me. Then he lighted the cigar and looked grave.

"'Did he come back?' he asked presently.

"'Yes. I was asleep, but I waked up and heard him

moving. Then I felt cold and went to sleep again. This morning I found the porthole open.'

"'Look here,' said the doctor, quietly, 'I don't care much for this ship. I don't care a rap for her reputation. I tell you what I will do. I have a good-sized place up here. I will share it with you, though I don't know you from Adam."

"I was very much surprised at the proposition. I could not imagine why he should take such a sudden interest in my welfare. However, his manner as he spoke of the ship was peculiar.

"'You are very good, Doctor,' I said. 'But really, I believe even now the cabin could be aired, or cleaned out, or something. Why do you not care for the ship?'

"'We are not superstitious in our profession, sir,' replied the doctor. 'But the sea makes people so. I don't want to prejudice you, and I don't want to frighten you, but if you will take my advice you will move in here. I would as soon see you overboard,' he added, 'as know that you or any other man was to sleep in one hundred and five.'

"'Good gracious! Why?' I asked.

"'Just because on the last three trips the people who have slept there actually have gone overboard,' he answered gravely.

"The intelligence was startling and exceedingly unpleasant, I confess. I looked hard at the doctor to see whether he was making game of me, but he looked perfectly serious. I thanked him warmly for his offer, but told him I intended to be the exception to the rule

by which every one who slept in that particular stateroom went overboard. He did not say much, but looked as grave as ever, and hinted that before we got across I should probably reconsider his proposal. In the course of time we went to breakfast, at which only an inconsiderable number of passengers assembled. I noticed that one or two of the officers who breakfasted with us looked grave. After breakfast I went into my stateroom in order to get a book. The curtains of the upper berth were still closely drawn. Not a word was to be heard. My room-mate was probably still asleep.

"As I came out I met the steward whose business it was to look after me. He whispered that the captain wanted to see me, and then scuttled away down the passage as if very anxious to avoid any questions. I went toward the captain's cabin, and found him waiting for me.

" 'Sir,' said he, 'I want to ask a favor of you.'

"I answered that I would do anything to oblige him.

" 'Your room-mate has disappeared,' he said. 'He is known to have turned in early last night. Did you notice anything extraordinary in his manner?'

"The question coming, as it did, in exact confirmation of the fears the doctor had expressed half an hour earlier, staggered me.

" 'You don't mean to say he has gone overboard?' I asked.

" 'I fear he has,' answered the captain.

" 'This is the most extraordinary thing—' I began.

" 'Why?' he asked.

"'He is the fourth, then?' I explained. In answer to another question from the captain, I explained, without mentioning the doctor, that I had heard the story concerning one hundred and five. He seemed very much annoyed at hearing that I knew of it. I told him what had occurred in the night.

"'What you say,' he replied, 'coincides almost exactly with what was told me by the room-mates of two of the other three. They bolt out of bed and run down the passage. Two of them were seen to go overboard by the watch; we stopped and lowered boats, but they were not found. Nobody, however, saw or heard the man who was lost last night—if he is really lost. The steward, who is a superstitious fellow, perhaps, and expected something to go wrong, went to look for him this morning, and found his berth empty, but his clothes lying about, just as he had left them. The steward was the only man on board who knew him by sight, and he has been searching everywhere for him. He has disappeared! Now, sir, I want to beg you not to mention the circumstance to any of the passengers; I don't want the ship to get a bad name, and nothing hangs about an ocean-goer like stories of suicides. You shall have your choice of any one of the officers' cabins you like, including my own, for the rest of the passage. Is that a fair bargain?'

"'Very,' said I; 'and I am much obliged to you. But since I am alone, and have the stateroom to myself, I would rather not move. If the steward will take out that unfortunate man's things, I would as

lief stay where I am. I will not say anything about the matter, and I think I can promise you that I will not follow my room-mate.'

"The captain tried to dissuade me from my intention, but I preferred having a stateroom alone to being the chum of any officer on board. I do not know whether I acted foolishly, but if I had taken his advice I should have had nothing more to tell. There would have remained the disagreeable coincidence of several suicides occurring among men who had slept in the same cabin, but that would have been all.

"That was not the end of the matter, however, by any means. I obstinately made up my mind that I would not be disturbed by such tales, and I even went so far as to argue the question with the captain. There was something wrong about the stateroom, I said. It was rather damp. The porthole had been left open last night. My room-mate might have been ill when he came on board, and he might have become delirious after he went to bed. He might even now be hiding somewhere on board, and might be found later. The place ought to be aired and the fastening of the port looked to. If the captain would give me leave, I would see that what I thought necessary was done immediately.

" 'Of course you have a right to stay where you are if you please,' he replied, rather petulantly; 'but I wish you would turn out and let me lock the place up, and be done with it.'

"I did not see it in the same light, and left the captain, after promising to be silent concerning the dis-

appearance of my companion. The latter had had no acquaintances on board, and was not missed in the course of the day. Toward evening I met the doctor again, and he asked me whether I had changed my mind. I told him I had not.

" 'Then you will before long,' he said, very gravely.

III

"We played whist in the evening, and I went to bed late. I will confess now that I felt a disagreeable sensation when I entered my stateroom. I could not help thinking of the tall man I had seen on the previous night, who was now dead, drowned, tossing about in the long swell, two or three hundred miles astern. His face rose very distinctly before me as I undressed, and I even went so far as to draw back the curtains of the upper berth, as though to persuade myself that he was actually gone. I also bolted the door of the stateroom. Suddenly I became aware that the porthole was open and fastened back. This was more than I could stand. I hastily threw on my dressing-gown and went in search of Robert, the steward of my passage. I was very angry, I remember, and when I found him I dragged him roughly to the door of one hundred and five, and pushed him toward the open porthole.

" 'What the deuce do you mean, you scoundrel, by leaving that port open every night? Don't you know it is against the regulations? Don't you know that if the ship heeled and the water began to come in ten men could not shut it? I will report you to the captain, you blackguard, for endangering the ship!'

"I was exceedingly wroth. The man trembled and turned pale, and then began to shut the round glass plate with the heavy brass fittings.

" 'Why don't you answer me?' I said roughly.

" 'If you please, sir,' faltered Robert, 'there's nobody on board as can keep this 'ere port shut at night. You can try it yourself, sir. I ain't a-going to stop hany longer on board o' this vessel, sir; I ain't, indeed. But if I was you, sir, I'd just clear out and go and sleep with the surgeon, or something, I would. Look 'ere, sir, is that fastened what you may call securely, or not, sir? Try it, sir, see if it will move a hinch.'

"I tried the port, and found it perfectly tight.

" 'Well, sir,' continued Robert, triumphantly, 'I wager my reputation as a A1 steward, that in arf an hour it will be open again; fastened back, too, sir, that's the horful thing—fastened back!'

"I examined the great screw and the looped nut that ran on it.

" 'If I find it open in the night, Robert, I will give you a sovereign. It is not possible. You may go.'

" 'Soverin, did you say, sir? Very good, sir. Thank ye, sir. Good-night, sir. Pleasant reepose, sir, and all manner of hinchantin' dreams, sir.'

"Robert scuttled away, delighted at being released. Of course, I thought he was trying to account for his negligence by a silly story, intended to frighten me, and I disbelieved him. The consequence was that he got his sovereign, and I spent a very peculiarly unpleasant night.

"I went to bed, and five minutes after I had rolled

myself up in my blankets the inexorable Robert extinguished the light that burned steadily behind the ground-glass pane near the door. I lay quite still in the dark trying to go to sleep, but I soon found that impossible. It had been some satisfaction to be angry with the steward, and the diversion had banished that unpleasant sensation I had at first experienced when I thought of the drowned man who had been my chum; but I was no longer sleepy, and I lay awake for some time, occasionally glancing at the porthole, which I could just see from where I lay, and which, in the darkness, looked like a faintly luminous soup-plate suspended in blackness. I believe I must have lain there for an hour, and, as I remember, I was just dozing into sleep when I was roused by a draught of cold air and by distinctly feeling the spray of the sea blown upon my face. I started to my feet, and not having allowed in the dark for the motion of the ship, I was instantly thrown violently across the stateroom upon the couch which was placed beneath the porthole. I recovered myself immediately, however, and climbed upon my knees. The porthole was again wide open and fastened back!

"Now these things are facts. I was wide awake when I got up, and I should certainly have been waked by the fall had I still been dozing. Moreover, I bruised my elbows and knees badly, and the bruises were there on the following morning to testify to the fact, if I myself had doubted it. The porthole was wide open and fastened back—a thing so unaccountable that I remember very well feeling astonishment

rather than fear when I discovered it. I at once closed the plate again and screwed down the loop nut with all my strength. It was very dark in the stateroom. I reflected that the port had certainly been opened within an hour after Robert had at first shut it in my presence, and I determined to watch it and see whether it would open again. Those brass fittings are very heavy and by no means easy to move; I could not believe that the clamp had been turned by the shaking of the screw. I stood peering out through the thick glass at the alternate white and gray streaks of the sea that foamed beneath the ship's side. I must have remained there a quarter of an hour.

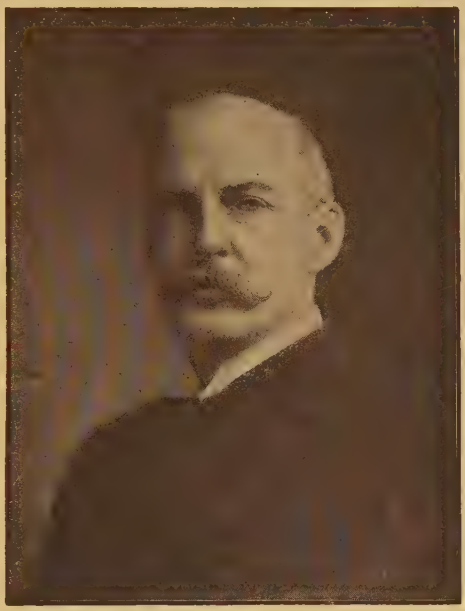
"Suddenly, as I stood, I distinctly heard something moving behind me in one of the berths, and a moment afterward, just as I turned instinctively to look—though I could, of course, see nothing in the darkness—I heard a very faint groan. I sprang across the stateroom, and tore the curtains of the upper berth aside, thrusting in my hands to discover if there were any one there. There was some one.

"I remember that the sensation as I put my hands forward was as though I were plunging them into the air of a damp cellar, and from behind the curtain came a gust of wind that smelled horribly of stagnant sea-water. I laid hold of something that had the shape of a man's arm, but was smooth, and wet, and icy cold. But suddenly, as I pulled, the creature sprang violently forward against me, a clammy, oozy mass, as it seemed to me, heavy and wet, yet endowed with a sort of supernatural strength. I reeled across the state-

room, and in an instant the door opened and the thing rushed out. I had not had time to be frightened, and quickly recovering myself, I sprang through the door and gave chase at the top of my speed, but I was too late. Ten yards before me I could see—I am sure I saw it—a dark shadow moving in the dimly lighted passage, quickly as the shadow of a fast horse thrown before a dog-cart by the lamp on a dark night. But in a moment it had disappeared, and I found myself holding on to the polished rail that ran along the bulkhead where the passage turned toward the companion. My hair stood on end, and the cold perspiration rolled down my face. I am not ashamed of it in the least: I was very badly frightened.

"Still I doubted my senses, and pulled myself together. It was absurd, I thought. The Welsh rarebit I had eaten had disagreed with me. I had been in a nightmare. I made my way back to my stateroom, and entered it with an effort. The whole place smelled of stagnant sea-water, as it had when I had waked on the previous evening. It required my utmost strength to go in and grope among my things for a box of wax lights. As I lighted a railway reading-lantern which I always carry in case I want to read after the lamps are out, I perceived that the porthole was again open, and a sort of creeping horror began to take possession of me which I never felt before, nor wish to feel again. But I got a light and proceeded to examine the upper berth, expecting to find it drenched with sea-water.

"But I was disappointed. The bed had been slept in, and the smell of the sea was strong; but the bed-



F. Louis Crawford

ding was as dry as a bone. I fancied that Robert had not had the courage to make the bed after the accident of the previous night—it had all been a hideous dream. I drew the curtains back as far as I could and examined the place very carefully. It was perfectly dry. But the porthole was open again. With a sort of dull bewilderment of horror, I closed it and screwed it down, and thrusting my heavy stick through the brass loop, wrenched it with all my might, till the thick metal began to bend under the pressure. Then I hooked my reading-lantern into the red velvet at the head of the couch, and sat down to recover my senses if I could. I sat there all night, unable to think of rest —hardly able to think at all. But the porthole remained closed, and I did not believe it would now open again without the application of a considerable force.

"The morning dawned at last, and I dressed myself slowly, thinking over all that had happened in the night. It was a beautiful day and I went on deck, glad to get out in the early pure sunshine, and to smell the breeze from the blue water, so different from the noisome, stagnant odor from my stateroom. Instinctively I turned aft, toward the surgeon's cabin. There he stood with a pipe in his mouth, taking his morning airing precisely as on the preceding day.

" 'Good-morning,' said he quietly, but looking at me with evident curiosity.

" 'Doctor, you were quite right,' said I. 'There is something wrong about that place.'

" 'I thought you would change your mind,' he answered, rather triumphantly. 'You have had a bad

night, eh? Shall I make you a pick-me-up? I have a capital recipe.'

"'No, thanks,' I cried. 'But I would like to tell you what happened.'

"I then tried to explain as clearly as possible precisely what had occurred, not omitting to state that I had been scared as I had never been scared in my whole life before. I dwelt particularly on the phenomenon of the porthole, which was a fact to which I could testify, even if the rest had been an illusion. I had closed it twice in the night, and the second time I had actually bent the brass in wrenching it with my stick. I believe I insisted a good deal on this point.

"'You seem to think I am likely to doubt the story,' said the doctor, smiling at the detailed account of the state of the porthole. 'I do not doubt it in the least. I renew my invitation to you. Bring your traps here, and take half my cabin.'

"'Come and take half of mine for one night,' I said. 'Help me to get at the bottom of this thing.'

"'You will get to the bottom of something else if you try,' answered the doctor.

"'What?' I asked.

"'The bottom of the sea. I am going to leave the ship. It is not canny.'

"'Then you will not help me to find out—'

"'Not I,' said the doctor, quickly. 'It is my business to keep my wits about me—not to go fiddling about with ghosts and things.'

"'Do you really believe it is a ghost?' I inquired, rather contemptuously. But as I spoke I remembered

very well the horrible sensation of the supernatural which had got possession of me during the night. The doctor turned sharply on me:

"'Have you any reasonable explanation of these things to offer?' he asked. 'No; you have not. Well, you say you will find an explanation. I say that you won't, sir, simply because there is not any.'

"'But, my dear sir,' I retorted, 'do you, a man of science, mean to tell me that such things can not be explained?'

"'I do,' he answered, stoutly. 'And if they could, I would not be concerned in the explanation.'

"I did not care to spend another night alone in the stateroom, and yet I was obstinately determined to get at the root of the disturbances. I do not believe there are many men who would have slept there alone, after passing two such nights. But I made up my mind to try it, if I could not get any one to share a watch with me. The doctor was evidently not inclined for such an experiment. He said he was a surgeon, and that in case any accident occurred on board he must always be in readiness. He could not afford to have his nerves unsettled. Perhaps he was quite right, but I am inclined to think that his precaution was prompted by his inclination. On inquiry, he informed me that there was no one on board who would be likely to join me in my investigations, and after a little more conversation I left him. A little later I met the captain, and told him my story. I said that if no one would spend the night with me I would ask leave to have the light burning all night, and would try it alone.

"'Look here,' said he, 'I will tell you what I will do. I will share your watch myself, and we will see what happens. It is my belief that we can find out between us. There may be some fellow skulking on board who steals a passage by frightening the passengers. It is just possible that there may be something queer in the carpentering of that berth.'

"I suggested taking the ship's carpenter below and examining the place; but I was overjoyed at the captain's offer to spend the night with me. He accordingly sent for the workman and ordered him to do anything I required. We went below at once. I had all the bedding cleared out of the upper berth, and we examined the place thoroughly to see if there was a board loose anywhere, or a panel which could be opened or pushed aside. We tried the planks everywhere, tapped the flooring, unscrewed the fittings of the lower berth and took it to pieces—in short, there was not a square inch of the stateroom which was not searched and tested. Everything was in perfect order, and we put everything back in its place. As we were finishing our work, Robert came to the door and looked in.

"'Well, sir—find anything, sir?' he asked with a ghastly grin.

"'You were right about the porthole, Robert,' I said, and I gave him the promised sovereign. The carpenter did his work silently and skilfully, following my directions. When he had done he spoke.

"'I'm a plain man, sir,' he said. 'But it's my belief you had better just turn out your things and let me

run half a dozen four-inch screws through the door of this cabin. There's no good never came o' this cabin yet, sir, and that's all about it. There's been four lives lost out o' here to my own remembrance, and that in four trips. Better give it up, sir—better give it up!'

" 'I will try it for one night more,' I said.

" 'Better give it up, sir—better give it up! It's a precious bad job,' repeated the workman, putting his tools in his bag and leaving the cabin.

"But my spirits had risen considerably at the prospect of having the captain's company, and I made up my mind not to be prevented from going to the end of the strange business. I abstained from Welsh rarebits and grog that evening, and did not even join in the customary game of whist. I wanted to be quite sure of my nerves, and my vanity made me anxious to make a good figure in the captain's eyes.

IV

"The captain was one of those splendidly tough and cheerful specimens of seafaring humanity whose combined courage, hardihood, and calmness in difficulty leads them naturally into high positions of trust. He was not the man to be led away by an idle tale, and the mere fact that he was willing to join me in the investigation was proof that he thought there was something seriously wrong, which could not be accounted for on ordinary theories, nor laughed down as a common superstition. To some extent, too, his reputation was at stake, as well as the reputation of

the ship. It is no light thing to lose passengers overboard, and he knew it.

"About ten o'clock that evening, as I was smoking a last cigar, he came up to me and drew me aside from the beat of the other passengers who were patrolling the deck in the warm darkness.

" 'This is a serious matter, Mr. Brisbane,' he said. 'We must make up our minds either way—to be disappointed or to have a pretty rough time of it. You see, I can not afford to laugh at the affair, and I will ask you to sign your name to a statement of whatever occurs. If nothing happens to-night we will try it again to-morrow and next day. Are you ready?'

"So we went below and entered the stateroom. As we went in I could see Robert the steward, who stood a little further down the passage, watching us, with his usual grin, as though certain that something dreadful was about to happen. The captain closed the door behind us and bolted it.

" 'Supposing we put your portmanteau before the door,' he suggested. 'One of us can sit on it. Nothing can get out then. Is the port screwed down?'

"I found it as I had left it in the morning. Indeed, without using a lever, as I had done, no one could have opened it. I drew back the curtains of the upper berth so that I could see well into it. By the captain's advice I lighted my reading-lantern, and placed it so that it shone upon the white sheets above. He insisted upon sitting on the portmanteau, declaring that he wished to be able to swear that he had sat before the door.

"Then he requested me to search the stateroom thoroughly, an operation very soon accomplished, as it consisted merely in looking beneath the lower berth and under the couch below the porthole. The spaces were quite empty.

" 'It is impossible for any human being to get in,' I said, 'or for any human being to open the port.'

" 'Very good,' said the captain, calmly. 'If we see anything now, it must be either imagination or something supernatural.'

"I sat down on the edge of the lower berth.

" 'The first time it happened,' said the captain, crossing his legs and leaning back against the door, 'was in March. The passenger who slept here, in the upper berth, turned out to have been a lunatic—at all events, he was known to have been a little touched, and he had taken his passage without the knowledge of his friends. He rushed out in the middle of the night, and threw himself overboard, before the officer who had the watch could stop him. We stopped and lowered a boat; it was a quiet night, just before that heavy weather came on; but we could not find him. Of course his suicide was afterward accounted for on the ground of his insanity.'

" 'I suppose that often happens?' I remarked, rather absently.

" 'Not often—no,' said the captain; 'never before in my experience, though I have heard of it happening on board of other ships. Well, as I was saying, that occurred in March. On the very next trip—

What are you looking at?' he asked, stopping suddenly in his narration.

"I believe I gave no answer. My eyes were riveted upon the porthole. It seemed to me that the brass loop-nut was beginning to turn very slowly upon the screw—so slowly, however, that I was not sure it moved at all. I watched it intently, fixing its position in my mind, and trying to ascertain whether it changed. Seeing where I was looking, the captain looked too.

" 'It moves!' he exclaimed, in a tone of conviction. 'No, it does not,' he added, after a minute.

" 'If it were the jarring of the screw,' said I, 'it would have opened during the day; but I found it this evening jammed tight as I left it this morning.'

"I rose and tried the nut. It was certainly loosened, for by an effort I could move it with my hands.

" 'The queer thing,' said the captain, 'is that the second man who was lost is supposed to have got through that very port. We had a terrible time over it. It was in the middle of the night, and the weather was very heavy; there was an alarm that one of the ports was open and the sea running in. I came below and found everything flooded, the water pouring in every time she rolled, and the whole port swinging from the top bolts—not the porthole in the middle. Well, we managed to shut it, but the water did some damage. Ever since that the place smells of seawater from time to time. We supposed the passenger had thrown himself out, though the Lord only knows how he did it. The steward kept telling me that he

could not keep anything shut here. Upon my word—I can smell it now, can not you?' he inquired, sniffing the air suspiciously.

" 'Yes—distinctly,' I said, and I shuddered as that same odor of stagnant sea-water grew stronger in the cabin. 'Now, to smell like this, the place must be damp,' I continued, 'and yet when I examined it with the carpenter this morning everything was perfectly dry. It is most extraordinary—hallo!'

"My reading-lantern, which had been placed in the upper berth, was suddenly extinguished. There was still a good deal of light from the pane of ground glass near the door, behind which loomed the regulation lamp. The ship rolled heavily, and the curtain of the upper berth swung far out into the stateroom and back again. I rose quickly from my seat on the edge of the bed, and the captain at the same moment started to his feet with a loud cry of surprise. I had turned with the intention of taking down the lantern to examine it, when I heard his exclamation, and immediately afterward his call for help. I sprang toward him. He was wrestling with all his might with the brass loop of the port. It seemed to turn against his hands in spite of all his efforts. I caught up my cane, a heavy oak stick I always used to carry, and thrust it through the ring and bore on it with all my strength. But the strong wood snapped suddenly, and I fell upon the couch. When I rose again the port was wide open, and the captain was standing with his back against the door, pale to the lips.

" 'There is something in that berth!' he cried, in a

strange voice, his eyes almost starting from his head. 'Hold the door, while I look—it shall not escape us, whatever it is!'

"But instead of taking his place, I sprang upon the lower bed and seized something which lay in the upper berth.

"It was something ghostly, horrible beyond words, and it moved in my grip. It was like the body of a man long drowned, and yet it moved and had the strength of ten men living; but I gripped it with all my might—the slippery, oozy, horrible thing. The dead white eyes seemed to stare at me out of the dusk; the putrid odor of rank sea-water was about it, and its shiny hair hung in foul wet curls over its dead face. I wrestled with the dead thing; it thrust itself upon me and forced me back and nearly broke my arms; it wound its corpse's arms about my neck, the living death, and overpowered me, so that I, at last, cried aloud and fell and left my hold.

"As I fell the thing sprang across me and seemed to throw itself upon the captain. When I last saw him on his feet his face was white and his lips set. It seemed to me that he struck a violent blow at the dead being, and then he, too, fell forward upon his face, with an inarticulate cry of horror.

"The thing paused an instant, seeming to hover over his prostrate body, and I could have screamed again for very fright, but I had no voice left. The thing vanished suddenly, and it seemed to my disturbed senses that it made its exit through the open port, though how that was possible, considering the

smallness of the aperture, is more than any one can tell. I lay a long time upon the floor, and the captain lay beside me. At last I partially recovered my senses and moved, and I instantly knew that my arm was broken—the small bone of the left forearm near the wrist.

"I got upon my feet somehow, and with my remaining hand I tried to raise the captain. He groaned and moved, and at last came to himself. He was not hurt, but he seemed badly stunned.

"Well, do you want to hear any more? There is nothing more. That is the end of my story. The carpenter carried out his scheme of running half a dozen four-inch screws through the door of one hundred and five, and if ever you take a passage in the 'Kamtschatka,' you may ask for a berth in that stateroom. You will be told that it is engaged—yes—it is engaged by that dead thing.

"I finished the trip in the surgeon's cabin. He doctored my broken arm, and advised me not to 'fiddle about with ghosts and things' any more. The captain was very silent, and never sailed again in that ship, though it is still running. And I will not sail in her either. It was a very disagreeable experience and I was very badly frightened, which is a thing I do not like. That is all. That is how I saw a ghost—if it was a ghost. It was dead, anyhow."

THE INMATE OF THE DUNGEON

BY W. C. MORROW

William C. Morrow is a California writer with a strong leaning toward the tragic in literature. His most notable book, "Man: His Mark," is a melodramatic novel whose action is set in the impressive mountain scenery of California. There are but two main actors: a man who lost his beloved, and the woman who has caused his loss—for whom, nevertheless, he performs a heroic act of self-sacrifice. The same strength of style which distinguishes his novels is to be found in his short stories, of which "The Inmate of the Dungeon" is a representative selection.

THE INMATE OF THE DUNGEON

BY W. C. MORROW

AFTER the Board of State Prison Directors, sitting in session at the prison, had heard and disposed of the complaints and petitions of a number of convicts, the warden announced that all who wished to appear had been heard. Thereupon a certain uneasy and apprehensive expression, which all along had sat upon the faces of the directors, became visibly deeper. The chairman—nervous, energetic, abrupt, incisive man—glanced at a slip of paper in his hand, and said to the warden:

"Send a guard for convict No. 14,208."

The warden started and became slightly pale. Somewhat confused, he haltingly replied, "Why, he has expressed no desire to appear before you."

"Nevertheless, you will send for him at once," responded the chairman.

The warden bowed stiffly and directed a guard to produce the convict. Then, turning to the chairman, he said:

"I am ignorant of your purpose in summoning this man, but of course I have no objection. I desire, however, to make a statement concerning him before he appears."

"When we shall have called for a statement from

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you," coldly responded the chairman, "you may make one."

The warden sank back into his seat. He was a tall, fine-looking man, well-bred and intelligent, and had a kindly face. Though ordinarily cool, courageous, and self-possessed, he was unable to conceal a strong emotion which looked much like fear. A heavy silence fell upon the room, disturbed only by the official stenographer, who was sharpening his pencils. A stray beam of light from the westering sun slipped into the room between the edge of the window-shade and the sash, and fell across the chair reserved for the convict. The uneasy eyes of the warden finally fell upon this beam, and there his glance rested. The chairman, without addressing any one particularly, remarked:

"There are ways of learning what occurs in a prison without the assistance of either the wardens or the convicts."

Just then the guard appeared with the convict, who shambled in painfully and laboriously, as with a string he held up from the floor the heavy iron ball which was chained to his ankles. He was about forty-five years old. Undoubtedly he once had been a man of uncommon physical strength, for a powerful skeleton showed underneath the sallow skin which covered his emaciated frame. His sallowness was peculiar and ghastly. It was partly that of disease, and partly of something worse; and it was this something that accounted also for his shrunken muscles and manifest feebleness.

There had been no time to prepare him for presentation to the Board. As a consequence, his unstockinged toes showed through his gaping shoes; the dingy suit of prison stripes which covered his gaunt frame was frayed and tattered; his hair had not been recently cut to the prison fashion, and, being rebellious, stood out upon his head like bristles; and his beard, which, like his hair, was heavily dashed with gray, had not been shaved for weeks. These incidents of his appearance combined with a very peculiar expression of his face to make an extraordinary picture. It is difficult to describe this almost unearthly expression. With a certain suppressed ferocity it combined an inflexibility of purpose that sat like an iron mask upon him. His eyes were hungry and eager; they were the living part of him, and they shone luminous from beneath shaggy brows. His forehead was massive, his head of fine proportions, his jaw square and strong, and his thin, high nose showed traces of an ancestry that must have made a mark in some corner of the world at some time in history. He was prematurely old; this was seen in his gray hair and in the uncommonly deep wrinkles which lined his forehead and the corners of his eyes and of his mouth.

Upon stumbling weakly into the room, faint with the labor of walking and of carrying the iron ball, he looked around eagerly, like a bear driven to his haunches by the hounds. His glance passed so rapidly and unintelligently from one face to another that he could not have had time to form a conception of

the persons present, until his swift eyes encountered the face of the warden. Instantly they flashed; he craned his neck forward; his lips opened and became blue; the wrinkles deepened about his mouth and eyes; his form grew rigid, and his breathing stopped. This sinister and terrible attitude—all the more so because he was wholly unconscious of it—was disturbed only when the chairman sharply commanded, "Take that seat."

The convict started as though he had been struck, and turned his eyes upon the chairman. He drew a deep inspiration, which wheezed and rattled as it passed into his chest. An expression of excruciating pain swept over his face. He dropped the ball, which struck the floor with a loud sound, and his long, bony fingers tore at the striped shirt over his breast. A groan escaped him, and he would have sunk to the floor had not the guard caught him and held him upright. In a moment it was over, and then, collapsing with exhaustion, he sank into the chair. There he sat, conscious and intelligent, but slouching, disorganized, and indifferent.

The chairman turned sharply to the guard. "Why did you manacle this man," he demanded, "when he is evidently so weak, and when none of the others were manacled?"

"Why, sir," stammered the guard, "surely you know who this man is: he is the most dangerous and desperate—"

"We know all about that. Remove his manacles."

The guard obeyed. The chairman turned to the

convict, and in a kindly manner said, "Do you know who we are?"

The convict got himself together a little and looked steadily at the chairman. "No," he replied after a pause. His manner was direct, and his voice was deep, though hoarse.

"We are the State Prison Directors. We have heard of your case, and we want you to tell us the whole truth about it."

The convict's mind worked slowly, and it was some time before he could comprehend the explanation and request. When he had accomplished that task he said, very slowly, "I suppose you want me to make a complaint, sir."

"Yes—if you have any to make."

The convict was getting himself in hand. He straightened, and gazed at the chairman with a peculiar intensity. Then firmly and clearly he answered, "I've no complaint to make."

The two men sat looking at each other in silence, and as they looked a bridge of human sympathy was slowly reared between them. The chairman rose, passed around an intervening table, went up to the convict, and laid a hand on his gaunt shoulder. There was a tenderness in his voice that few men had ever heard there.

"I know," said he, "that you are a patient and uncomplaining man, or we should have heard from you long ago. In asking you to make a statement I am merely asking for your help to right a wrong, if a wrong has been done. Leave your own wishes

entirely out of consideration, if you prefer. Assume, if you will, that it is not our intention or desire either to give you relief or to make your case harder for you. There are fifteen hundred human beings in this prison, and they are under the absolute control of one man. If a serious wrong is practiced upon one, it may be upon others. I ask you in the name of common humanity, and as one man of another, to put us in the way of working justice in this prison. If you have the instincts of a man within you, you will comply with my request. Speak out, therefore, like a man, and have no fear of anything."

The convict was touched and stung. He looked up steadily into the chairman's face, and firmly said, "There is nothing in this world that I fear." Then he hung his head, and presently he raised it and added, "I will tell you all about it."

At that moment he shifted his position so as to bring the beam of light perpendicularly across his face and chest, and it seemed to split him in twain. He saw it, and feasted his gaze upon it as it lay upon his breast. After a time he thus proceeded, speaking very slowly, and in a strangely monotonous voice:

"I was sent up for twenty years for killing a man. I hadn't been a criminal: I killed him without thinking, for he had robbed me and wronged me. I came here thirteen years ago. I had trouble at first—it galled me to be a convict; but I got over that, because the warden that was here then understood me and was kind to me, and he made me one of the best men in the prison. I don't say this to make you think I'm

complaining about the present warden, or that he didn't treat me kindly: I can take care of myself with him. I am not making any complaint. I ask no man's favor, and I fear no man's power."

"That is all right. Proceed."

"After the warden had made a good man out of me I worked faithfully, sir; I did everything they told me to do; I worked willingly and like a slave. It did me good to work, and I worked hard. I never violated any of the rules after I was broken in. And then the law was passed giving credits to the men for good conduct. My term was twenty years, but I did so well that my credits piled up, and after I had been here ten years I could begin to see my way out. There were only about three years left. And, sir, I worked faithfully to make those years good. I knew that if I did anything against the rules I should lose my credits and have to stay nearly ten years longer. I knew all about that, sir: I never forgot it. I wanted to be a free man again, and I planned to go away somewhere and make the fight all over—to be a man in the world once more."

"We know all about your record in the prison. Proceed."

"Well, it was this way. You know they were doing some heavy work in the quarries and on the grades, and they wanted the strongest men in the prison. There weren't very many: there never are very many strong men in a prison. And I was one of 'em that they put on the heavy work, and I did it faithfully. They used to pay the men for extra work

—not pay 'em money, but the value of the money in candles, tobacco, extra clothes, and things like that. I loved to work, and I loved to work extra, and so did some of the other men. On Saturdays the men who had done extra work would fall in and go up to the captain of the guard and he would give to each man what was coming to him. He had it all down in a book, and when a man would come up and call for what was due him the captain would give it to him, whatever he wanted that the rules allowed.

"One Saturday I fell in with the others. A good many were ahead of me in the line, and when they got what they wanted they fell into a new line, waiting to be marched to the cells. When my turn in the line came I went up to the captain and said I would take mine in tobacco. He looked at me pretty sharply, and said, 'How did you get back in that line?' I told him I belonged there—that I had come to get my extra. He looked at his book, and he said, 'You've had your extra: you got tobacco.' And he told me to fall into the new line. I told him I hadn't received any tobacco; I said I hadn't got my extra, and hadn't been up before. He said, 'Don't spoil your record by trying to steal a little tobacco. Fall in.' . . . It hurt me, sir. I hadn't been up; I hadn't got my extra; and I wasn't a thief, and I never had been a thief, and no living man had a right to call me a thief. I said to him, straight, 'I won't fall in till I get my extra, and I'm not a thief, and no man can call me one, and no man can rob me of my just

dues.' He turned pale, and said, 'Fall in, there.' I said, 'I won't fall in till I get my dues.'

"With that he raised his hand as a signal, and the two guards behind him covered me with their rifles, and the guard on the west wall, and one on the north wall, and one on the portico in front of the arsenal, all covered me with rifles. The captain turned to a trusty and told him to call the warden. The warden came out, and the captain told him I was trying to run double on my extra, and said I was impudent and insubordinate and refused to fall in. The warden said, 'Drop that and fall in.' I told him I wouldn't fall in. I said I hadn't run double, that I hadn't got my extra, and that I would stay there till I died before I would be robbed of it. He asked the captain if there wasn't some mistake, and the captain looked at his book and said there was no mistake; he said he remembered me when I came up and got the tobacco and he saw me fall into the new line, but he didn't see me get back in the old line. The warden didn't ask the other men if they saw me get my tobacco and slip back into the old line. He just ordered me to fall in. I told him I would die before I would do that. I said I wanted my just dues and no more, and I asked him to call on the other men in line to prove that I hadn't been up.

"He said, 'That's enough of this.' He sent all the other men to the cells, and left me standing there. Then he told two guards to take me to the cells. They came and took hold of me, and I threw them off as if they were babies. Then more guards came up, and

one of them hit me over the head with a club, and I fell. And then, sir"—here the convict's voice fell to a whisper—"and then he told them to take me to the dungeon."

The sharp, steady glitter of the convict's eyes failed, and he hung his head and looked despairingly at the floor.

"Go on," said the chairman.

"They took me to the dungeon, sir. Did you ever see the dungeon?"

"Perhaps; but you may tell us about it."

The cold, steady gleam returned to the convict's eyes, as he fixed them again upon the chairman.

"There are several little rooms in the dungeon. The one they put me in was about five feet by eight. It has steel walls and ceiling, and a granite floor. The only light that comes in passes through a slit in the door. The slit is an inch wide and five inches long. It doesn't give much light, because the door is thick. It's about four inches thick, and is made of oak and sheet steel bolted through. The slit runs this way" —making a horizontal motion in the air—"and it is four inches above my eyes when I stand on tiptoe. And I can't look out at the factory wall forty feet away unless I hook my fingers in the slit and pull myself up."

He stopped and regarded his hands, the peculiar appearance of which we all had observed. The ends of the fingers were uncommonly thick; they were red and swollen, and the knuckles were curiously marked with deep white scars.

"Well, sir, there wasn't anything at all in the dungeon, but they gave me a blanket, and they put me on bread and water. That's all they ever give you in the dungeon. They bring the bread and water once a day, and that is at night, because if they come in the daytime it lets in the light.

"The next night after they put me in—it was Sunday night—the warden came with the guard and asked me if I was all right. I said I was. He said, 'Will you behave yourself and go to work to-morrow?' I said, 'No, sir; I won't go to work till I get what is due me.' He shrugged his shoulders, and said, 'Very well: maybe you'll change your mind after you have been in here a week.'

"They kept me there a week. The next Sunday night the warden came and said, 'Are you ready to go to work to-morrow?' and I said, 'No; I will not go to work till I get what is due me.' He called me hard names. I said it was a man's duty to demand his rights, and that a man who would stand to be treated like a dog was no man at all."

The chairman interrupted. "Did you not reflect," he asked, "that these officers would not have stooped to rob you?—that it was through some mistake they withheld your tobacco, and that in any event you had a choice of two things to lose—one a plug of tobacco, and the other seven years of freedom?"

"But they angered me and hurt me, sir, by calling me a thief, and they threw me in the dungeon like a beast. . . . I was standing for my rights, and my rights were my manhood; and that is something a man

can carry sound to the grave, whether he's bond or free, weak or powerful, rich or poor."

"Well, after you refused to go to work what did the warden do?"

The convict, although tremendous excitement must have surged and boiled within him, slowly, deliberately, and weakly came to his feet. He placed his right foot on the chair, and rested his right elbow on the raised knee. The index finger of his right hand, pointing to the chairman and moving slightly to lend emphasis to his narrative, was the only thing that modified the rigid immobility of his figure. Without a single change in the pitch or modulation of his voice, never hurrying, but speaking with the slow and dreary monotony with which he had begun, he nevertheless—partly by reason of these evidences of his incredible self-control—made a formidable picture as he proceeded:

"When I told him that, sir, he said he'd take me to the ladder and see if he couldn't make me change my mind. . . . Yes, sir; he said he'd take me to the ladder." (Here there was a long pause.) "And I a human being, with flesh on my bones and the heart of a man in my body. The other warden hadn't tried to break my spirit on the ladder. He did break it, though; he broke it clear to the bottom of the man inside of me; but he did it with a human word, and not with the dungeon and the ladder. I didn't believe the warden when he said he would take me to the ladder. I couldn't imagine myself alive and put through at the ladder, and I couldn't imagine any human being

who could find the heart to put me through. If I had believed him I would have strangled him then and there, and got my body full of lead while doing it. No, sir; I could not believe it.

"And then he told me to come on. I went with him and the guards. He brought me to the ladder. I had never seen it before. It was a heavy wooden ladder, leaned against the wall, and the bottom was bolted to the floor and the top to the wall. A whip was on the floor." (Again there was a pause.) "The warden told me to strip, sir, and I stripped. . . . And still I didn't believe he would whip me. I thought he just wanted to scare me.

"Then he told me to face up to the ladder. I did so, and reached my arms up to the straps. They strapped my arms to the ladder, and stretched so hard that they pulled me up clear of the floor. Then they strapped my legs to the ladder. The warden then picked up the whip. He said to me, 'I'll give you one more chance: will you go to work to-morrow?' I said, 'No; I won't go to work till I get my dues.' 'Very well,' said he, 'you'll get your dues now.' And then he stepped back and raised the whip. I turned my head and looked at him, and I could see it in his eyes that he meant to strike. . . . And when I saw that, sir, I felt that something inside of me was about to burst."

The convict paused to gather up his strength for the crisis of his story, yet not in the least particular did he change his position, the slight movement of his pointing finger, the steady gleam of his eye, or the slow monotony of his speech. I had never witnessed any

scene so dramatic as this, and yet all was absolutely simple and unintentional. I had been thrilled by the greatest actors, as with matchless skill they gave rein to their genius in tragic situations; but how inconceivably tawdry and cheap such pictures seemed in comparison with this! The claptrap of the music, the lights, the posing, the wry faces, the gasps, lunges, staggerings, rolling eyes—how flimsy and colorless, how mocking and grotesque, they all appeared beside this simple, uncouth, but genuine expression of immeasurable agony!

The stenographer held his pencil poised above the paper, and wrote no more.

"And then the whip came down across my back. The something inside of me twisted hard and then broke wide open, and went pouring all through me like melted iron. It was a hard fight to keep my head clear, but I did it. And then I said to the warden this: 'You've struck me with a whip in cold blood. You've tied me up hand and foot, to whip me like a dog. Well, whip me, then, till you fill your belly with it. You are a coward. You are lower, and meaner, and cowardlier than the lowest and meanest dog that ever yelped when his master kicked him. You were born a coward. Cowards will lie and steal, and you are the same as a thief and liar. No hound would own you for a friend. Whip me hard and long, you coward. Whip me, I say. See how good a coward feels when he ties up a man and whips him like a dog. Whip me till the last breath quits my body: if you leave me alive I will kill you for this.'

"His face got white. He asked me if I meant that, and I said, 'Yes; before God, I do.' Then he took the whip in both hands and came down with all his might."

"That was nearly two years ago," said the chairman. "You would not kill him now, would you?"

"Yes. I will kill him if I get a chance; and I feel it in me that the chance will come."

"Well, proceed."

"He kept on whipping me. He whipped me with all the strength of both hands. I could feel the broken skin curl up on my back, and when my head got too heavy to hold it straight it hung down, and I saw the blood on my legs and dripping off my toes into a pool of it on the floor. Something was straining and twisting inside of me again. My back didn't hurt much; it was the thing twisting inside of me that hurt. I counted the lashes, and when I counted to twenty-eight the twisting got so hard that it choked me and blinded me; . . . and when I woke up I was in the dungeon again, and the doctor had my back all plastered up, and he was kneeling beside me, feeling my pulse."

The prisoner had finished. He looked around vaguely, as though he wanted to go.

"And you have been in the dungeon ever since?"

"Yes, sir; but I don't mind that."

"How long?"

"Twenty-three months."

"On bread and water?"

"Yes; but that was all I wanted."

"Have you reflected that so long as you harbor a

determination to kill the warden you may be kept in the dungeon? You can't live much longer there, and if you die there you will never find the chance you want. If you say you will not kill the warden he may return you to the cells."

"But that would be a lie, sir; I will get a chance to kill him if I go to the cells. I would rather die in the dungeon than be a liar and sneak. If you send me to the cells I will kill him. But I will kill him without that. I will kill him, sir. . . . And he knows it."

Without concealment, but open, deliberate, and implacable, thus in the wrecked frame of a man, so close that we could have touched it, stood Murder—not boastful, but relentless as death.

"Apart from weakness, is your health good?" asked the chairman.

"Oh, it's good enough," wearily answered the convict. "Sometimes the twisting comes on, but when I wake up after it I'm all right."

The prison surgeon, under the chairman's direction, put his ear to the convict's chest, and then went over and whispered to the chairman.

"I thought so," said that gentleman. "Now, take this man to the hospital. Put him to bed where the sun will shine on him, and give him the most nourishing food."

The convict, giving no heed to this, shambled out with a guard and the surgeon.

The warden sat alone in the prison office with No. 14,208. That he at last should have been brought

face to face, and alone, with the man whom he had determined to kill, perplexed the convict. He was not manacled; the door was locked, and the key lay on the table between the two men. Three weeks in the hospital had proved beneficial, but a deathly pallor was still in his face.

"The action of the directors three weeks ago," said the warden, "made my resignation necessary. I have awaited the appointment of my successor, who is now in charge. I leave the prison to-day. In the meantime, I have something to tell you that will interest you. A few days ago a man who was discharged from the prison last year read what the papers have published recently about your case, and he has written to me confessing that it was he who got your tobacco from the captain of the guard. His name is Salter, and he looks very much like you. He had got his own extra, and when he came up again and called for yours the captain, thinking it was you, gave it to him. There was no intention on the captain's part to rob you."

The convict gasped and leaned forward eagerly.

"Until the receipt of this letter," resumed the warden, "I had opposed the movement which had been started for your pardon; but when this letter came I recommended your pardon, and it has been granted. Besides, you have a serious heart trouble. So you are now discharged from the prison."

The convict stared, and leaned back speechless. His eyes shone with a strange, glassy expression, and

his white teeth glistened ominously between his parted lips. Yet a certain painful softness tempered the iron in his face.

"The stage will leave for the station in four hours," continued the warden. "You have made certain threats against my life." The warden paused; then, in a voice that slightly wavered from emotion, he continued: "I shall not permit your intentions in that regard—for I care nothing about them—to prevent me from discharging a duty which, as from one man to another, I owe you. I have treated you with a cruelty the enormity of which I now comprehend. I thought I was right. My fatal mistake was in not understanding your nature. I misconstrued your conduct from the beginning, and in doing so I have laid upon my conscience a burden which will imbitter the remaining years of my life. I would do anything in my power, if it were not too late, to atone for the wrong I have done you. If, before I sent you to the dungeon, I could have understood the wrong and foreseen its consequences, I would cheerfully have taken my own life rather than raise a hand against you. The lives of us both have been wrecked; but your suffering is in the past—mine is present, and will cease only with my life. For my life is a curse, and I prefer not to keep it."

With that the warden, very pale, but with a clear purpose in his face, took a loaded revolver from a drawer and laid if before the convict.

"Now is your chance," he said, quietly: "no one can hinder you."

The convict gasped and shrank away from the weapon as from a viper.

"Not yet—not yet," he whispered, in agony.

The two men sat and regarded each other without the movement of a muscle.

"Are you afraid to do it?" asked the warden.

A momentary light flashed in the convict's eyes.

"No!" he gasped; "you know I am not. But I can't—not yet—not yet."

The convict, whose ghastly pallor, glassy eyes, and gleaming teeth sat like a mask of death upon his face, staggered to his feet.

"You have done it at last! you have broken my spirit. A human word has done what the dungeon and the whip could not do. . . . It twists inside of me now. . . I could be your slave for that human word." Tears streamed from his eyes. "I can't help crying. I'm only a baby, after all—and I thought I was a man."

He reeled, and the warden caught him and seated him in the chair. He took the convict's hand in his and felt a firm, true pressure there. The convict's eyes rolled vacantly. A spasm of pain caused him to raise his free hand to his chest; his thin, gnarled fingers —made shapeless by long use in the slit of the dungeon door—clutched automatically at his shirt. A faint, hard smile wrinkled his wan face, displaying the gleaming teeth more freely.

"That human word," he whispered—"if you had spoken it long ago, if—but it's all—it's all right—now. I'll go—I'll go to work—to-morrow."

There was a slightly firmer pressure of the hand that held the warden's; then it relaxed. The fingers which clutched the shirt slipped away, and the hand dropped to his side. The weary head sank back and rested on the chair; the strange, hard smile still sat upon the marble face, and a dead man's glassy eyes and gleaming teeth were upturned toward the ceiling.

THE OLD PARTISAN

BY OCTAVE THANET

Alice French (born at Andover, Mass., March 19, 1850) has spent her girlhood and womanhood in Iowa and Arkansas. Her fiction, most of which is descriptive of life and character in these States, has been written above the pseudonym of Octave Thanet—a name, it is said, that was suggested by some words on a passing railroad car. "The Old Partisan" depicts a ruling passion that is peculiarly American—the almost religious devotion that a plain citizen often displays toward a great political leader.

THE OLD PARTISAN

BY OCTAVE THANET

I SAT so far back in the gallery that my opinion of my delegate friend dwindled with every session. Nevertheless my unimportant seat had its advantages. I could see the vast assembly and watch the throbbing of the Republican pulse if I could not hear its heartbeats. Therefore, perhaps, I studied my neighbors more than I might study them under different circumstances. The great wooden hall had its transient and unsubstantial character stamped on every bare wooden joist and unclinched nail. It was gaudy with flags and bunting and cheap portraits. There were tin bannerets crookedly marshaled on the floor to indicate the homes of the different States. A few delegates, doubtless new to the business and overzealous, were already on the floor, but none of the principals were visible. They were perspiring and arguing in those committee rooms, those hotel lobbies and crowded hotel rooms, where the real business of the convention was already done and neatly prepared for presentation to the nation. I had nothing to keep me from studying my neighbors. In front of me sat two people who had occupied the same seats at every session that I was present at, a young girl and an old man. The girl wore the omnipresent shirtwaist (of

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pretty blue and white tints, with snowy cuffs and collar), and her green straw hat was decked with blue corn-flowers, from which I inferred that she had an eye on the fashions. Her black hair was thick and glossy under the green straw. I thought that she had a graceful neck. It was very white—whiter than her face, which had a touch of sunburn, as if she were often out in the open air. Somehow I concluded that she was a shop-girl and rode a wheel. If I were wrong it is not likely that I shall ever know.

The old man, I fancied, was not so old as he looked; his delicate, haggard profile may have owed its sunken lines and the dim eye to sickness rather than to years. He wore the heavy black broadcloth of the rural politician, and his coat sagged over his narrow chest as if he had left his waistcoat at home. On his coat lapel were four old-fashioned Blaine badges. Incessantly he fanned himself.

"It can't be they ain't going to nominate him today?" he asked rather than asserted, his voice breaking on the higher notes, the mere wreck of a voice.

"Oh, maybe later," the girl assured him.

"Well, I wanted to attend a Republican convention once more before I died. Your ma would have it I wasn't strong enough; but I knew better; you and I knew better, didn't we, Jennie?"

She made no answer except to pat his thin, ribbed, brown hand with her soft, white, slim one; but there was a world of sympathy in the gesture and her silent smile.

"I wonder what your ma said when she came down-

stairs and found the letter and us gone," he cackled with the garrulous glee of a child recounting successful mischief; "made me think of the times when you was little and I stole you away for the circus. Once your pa thought you was lost—'member? And once you had on your school dress and you'd tore it—she did scold you that time. But we had fun when they used to let me have money, didn't we, Jennie?"

"Well, now I earn money, we have good times, too, grandpa," said Jennie, smiling the same tender, comprehending smile.

"We do that; I don't know what I would do 'cept for you, lambie, and this is—this is a grand time, Jennie, you look and listen; it's a great thing to see a nation making its principles and its president—and such a president!"

He half turned his head as he spoke, with a mounting enthusiasm, thus bringing his flushing face and eager eyes—no longer dim—into the focus of his next neighbor's bright gray eyes. The neighbor was a young man, not very young, but hardly to be called elderly, of an alert bearing and kindly smile.

"I think him a pretty fair man myself," said the other with a jocose understatement; "I come from his town."

What was there in such a simple statement to bring a distinctly anxious look into the young girl's soft eyes? There it was; one could not mistake it.

"Well!" said the old man—there was a flattering deference in his voice. "Well, well. And—and maybe you've seen him lately?" The quavering tones

sharpened with a keener feeling; it was almost as if the man were inquiring for some one on whom he had a great stake of affection. "How did he look? Was he better, stronger?"

"Oh, he looked elegant," said the Ohio man, easily, but with a disconcerted side glance at the girl, whose eyes were imploring him.

"I've been a Blaine man ever since he was run, the time Bob Ingersoll nominated him," said the old man, who sighed as if relieved. "I was at that convention and heard the speech—"

"Ah, that was a speech to hear," said a man behind, and two or three men edged their heads nearer.

The old Republican straightened his bent shoulders, his winter-stung features softened and warmed at the manifestation of interest, his voice sank to the confidential undertone of the narrator.

"You're right, sir, right; it was a magnificent speech. I can see him jest as he stood there, a stoutish, good-looking, smooth-faced man, his eyes straight ahead, and an alternate that sat next me—I was an alternate; I've been an alternate four times; I could have been a delegate, but I says, 'No, abler men than me are wanting it; I'm willing to fight in the ranks.' But I wished I had a vote, a free vote that day, I tell you. The alternate near me, he says, 'You'll hear something fine now; I've heard him speak.' "

"You did, too, I guess."

"We could hear from the first minute. That kinder fixed our attention. He had a mellow, rich kind of voice that melted into our ears. We found ourselves

listening and liking him from the first sentence. At first he was as quiet as a summer breeze, but presently he began to warm up, and the words flowed like a stream of jewels. It was electrifying: it was thrilling, sir; it took us off our feet before we knew it, and when he came to the climax, those of us that weren't yelling in the aisles were jumping up and down on our chairs! I know I found myself prancing up and down on my own hat on a chair, swinging somebody else's hat and screaming at the top of my voice, with the tears running down my cheeks. God! sir, there were men there on their feet cheering their throats out that had to vote against him afterward—had to because they were instructed—no more free will than a checked trunk!" The light died out of his face. "Yes, sir, a great speech; never a greater ever made at a convention anywhere, never so great a speech, whoever made it: but it did no good, he wasn't nominated, and when we did nominate him we were cheated out of our victory. Well, we'll do better this day."

"We will that," said the other man, heartily; "McKinley—"

"You'll excuse me—" the old man struck in with a deprecating air, yet under the apology was something fiercely eager and anxious that glued the hearer's eyes to his quivering old face—"you'll excuse me. I—I am considerable of an invalid, and I don't keep the run of things as I used to. You see, I live with my daughter, and you know how women folks are, fretting lest things could make you sick, and my girl she

worries so, me reading the papers. Fact is I got a shock once, an awful shock"—he shivered involuntarily and his dim eyes clouded—"and it worried her seeing me read. Hadn't ought to; it don't worry Jennie here, who often gets me a paper, quiet like; but you know how it is with women—it's easier giving them their head a little—and so I don't see many papers, and I kinder dropped off. It seems queer, but I don't exactly sense it about this McKinley. Is he running against Blaine or jest for vice?"

The girl, under some feminine pretext of dropping and reaching for her handkerchief, threw upward a glance of appeal at the interlocutor. Hurriedly she stepped into the conversation. "My grandfather read a false report about—about Mr. Blaine's sickness, and he was not well at the time and it brought on a bad attack."

"I understand," said the listener, with a grave nod of his head and movement of his eyes in the girl's direction.

"But about McKinley!" the old man persisted.

"He's for Vice-President," the girl announced, her eyes fixed on the hesitating man from Canton. I have often admired the intrepid fashion in which a woman will put her conscience at a moral hedge, while a man of no finer spiritual fibre will be straining his eyes to find a hole through which he can crawl. "McKinley is not opposed to Blaine, is he?" she asked the man.

"The Republican party has no name that is more loved than that of James G. Blaine," said the man, gravely.

"That's so, that's so!" the old partisan assented eagerly; "to my mind he's a logical candidate."

The Canton man nodded, and asked if he had ever seen Blaine.

"Once, only once. I was on a delegation sent to wait on him and ask him to our town to speak—he was in Cincinnati. I held out my hand when my turn came, and the chairman nearly knocked the breath out of me by saying, 'Here's the man who gave more to our campaign fund and worked harder than any man in the county, and we all worked hard for you, too.' Well, Mr. Blaine looked at me. You know the intent way he looks. He has the most wonderful eyes; look right at you and seem to bore into you like a gimlet. I felt as if he was looking right down into my soul, and I tell you I was glad, for I choked up so I couldn't find a word, not a word, and I was ready and fluent enough in those days, too, I can tell you; but I stood there filling up, and squeezed his hand and gulped and got red, like a fool. But he understood. 'I have heard of your loyalty to Republican principles, Mr. Painter,' says he, in that beautiful voice of his, that was like a violin; and I burst in—I couldn't help it—'It ain't loyalty to Republican principles, it's to you.' I said that right out. And he smiled, and said he, 'Well, that's wrong, but it isn't for me to quarrel with you there, Mr. Painter,' and then they pushed me along: but twice while the talk was going on I saw him look my way and caught his eye, and he smiled, and when we were all shaking hands for good-by, he shook hands with a good, firm grip, and said

he, 'Good-by, Mr. Painter; I hope we shall meet again.' "

The old man drew a long sigh. "Those few moments paid for everything," he said. "I've never seen him since. I've been sick and lost money. I ain't the man I was. I never shall be put on any delegation again, or be sent to any convention; but I thought if I could only go once more to a Republican convention, and hear them holler for Blaine, and holler once more myself, I'd be willinger to die. And I told Tom Hale that, and he and Jennie raised the money. Yes, Jennie, I'm going to tell—he and Jennie put off being married a bit so's I could go, and go on plenty of money. Jennie, she worked a month longer to have plenty, and Tom, he slipped ten dollars into my hand unbeknown to her jest as we were going, so I'd always have a dime to give the waiter or the porter. I was never one of these hayseed farmers too stingy to give a colored boy a dime when he done his best. I didn't need no money for badges; I got my old badges —see!"

He pushed out the lapel of his coat, covered with those old-fashioned trade bits of tinsel and ribbon, smiling confidently. The girl had flushed crimson to the rim of her white collar; but there was not a trace of petulance in her air; and, all at once looking at him, her eyes filled with tears.

"Tom's an awful good fellow," he said, "an awful good fellow."

"I'm sure of that," said the Canton man, with the frank American friendliness, making a little bow in

Miss Jennie's direction; "but see here, Mr. Painter, do you come from Izard? Are you the man that saved the county for the Republicans, by mortgaging the farm and then going on a house-to-house canvass?"

"That's me," the old man acquiesced, blushing with pleasure; "I didn't think, though, that it was known outside—"

"Things go further than you guess. I'm a newspaper man, and I can tell you that I shall speak of it again in my paper. Well, I guess they've got through with their mail and the platform's coming in."

Thus he brushed aside the old man's agitated thanks.

"One moment," said the old man, "who—who's going to nominate him?"

For the space of an eyeblink the kindly Canton man looked embarrassed, then he said, briskly: "Foraker, Foraker of Ohio—he's the principal one. That's he now, chairman of the Committee on Resolutions. He's there, the tall man with the mustache—"

"Isn't that elderly man with the stooped shoulders and the chin beard and caved-in face Teller?" It was a man near me, on the seat behind, who spoke, tapping the Canton man with his fan, to attract his attention; already the pitiful concerns of the old man, who was "a little off" (as I had heard some one on the seat whisper), were sucked out of notice in the whirlpool of the approaching political storm.

"Yes, that's Teller," answered the Canton man, his mouth straightening and growing thin.

"Is it to be a bolt?"

The Canton man nodded, at which the other whistled and communicated the information to his neighbors, one of whom remarked, "Let 'em bolt and be d——d!" A subtle excitement seemed to communicate its vibrations to all the gallery. Perhaps I should except the old partisan; he questioned the girl in a whisper, and then, seeming to be satisfied, watched the strange scene that ensued with an expression of patient weariness. The girl explained parts of the platform to him and he assented; it was good Republican doctrine, he said, but what do they mean with all this talk against the money; were they having trouble with the mining States again? The Canton man stopped to explain—he certainly was good-humored.

During the next twenty minutes, filled as they were with savage emotion, while the galleries, like the floor, were on their chairs yelling, cheering, brandishing flags and fists and fans and pampas plumes of red, white, and blue at the little band of silver men who marched through the ranks of their former comrades, he stood, he waved his fan in his feeble old hand, but he did not shout. "You must excuse me," said he, "I'm all right on the money question, but I'm saving my voice to shout for him!"

"That's right," said the Canton man; but he took occasion to cast a backward glance which I met, and it said as plainly as a glance can speak, "I wish I were out of this!"

Meanwhile, with an absent but happy smile, the old Blaine man was keeping time to the vast waves of sound that rose and swelled above the band, above the

cheering, above the cries of anger and scorn, the tremendous chorus that had stiffened men's hearts as they marched to death and rang through streets filled with armies and thrilled the waiting hearts at home:

"Three cheers for the red, white, and blue!
Three cheers for the red, white, and blue!
The army and navy forever, three cheers for the red, white, and blue!"

But when the chairman had stilled the tumult and made his grim comment, "There appear to be enough delegates left to transact business," the old partisan cast his eyes down to the floor with a chuckle. "I can't see the hole they made, it's so small. Say, ain't he a magnificent chairman; you can hear every word he says!"

"Bully chairman," said a cheerful "rooter" in the rear, who had enjoyed the episode more than words can say, and had cheered the passing of Silver with such choice quotations from popular songs as "Good-by, my lover, good-by," and "Just tell them that you saw me," and plainly felt that he, too, had adorned the moment. "I nearly missed coming this morning, and I wouldn't have missed it for a tenner; they're going to nominate now."

The old man caught his breath; then he smiled. "I'll help you shout pretty soon," said he, while he sat down very carefully.

The "rooter," a good-looking young fellow with a Reed button and three or four gaudy badges decking his crash coat, nodded and tapped his temple furtively, still retaining his expression of radiant good-nature. The Canton man nodded and frowned.

I felt that the Canton man need not be afraid. Somehow we were all tacitly taking care that this poor, bewildered soul should not have its little dream of loyal, unselfish satisfaction dispelled.

"Ah, my countrymen," I thought, "you do a hundred crazy things, you crush *les convenances* under foot, you can be fooled by frantic visionaries—but how I love you!"

It was Baldwin of Iowa that made the first speech. He was one of the very few men—I had almost said of the two men—that we in the galleries had the pleasure of hearing; and we could hear every word.

He began with a glowing tribute to Blaine. At the first sentence, our old man flung his gray head in the air with the gesture of the war-horse when he catches the first, far-off scream of the trumpet. He leaned forward, his features twitching, his eyes burning; the fan dropped out of his limp hand; his fingers, rapping his palm, clinched and loosened themselves unconsciously in an overpowering agitation. His face was white as marble, with ominous blue shadows; but every muscle was strained; his chest expanded; his shoulders drew back; his mouth was as strong and firm as a young man's. For a second we could see what he had been at his prime.

Then the orator's climax came, and the name—the magic name that was its own campaign cry in itself.

The old partisan leaped to his feet; he waved his hands above his head; wild, strange, in his white flame of excitement. He shouted; and we all shouted with him, the McKinley man and the Reed man vying with

each other (I here offer my testimony to the scope and quality of that young Reed man's voice), and the air rang about us: "Blaine! Blaine! James G. Blaine!" He shrieked the name again and again, goading into life the waning applause. Then in an instant his will snapped under the strain; his gray head tilted in the air; his gray head went back on his neck.

The Canton man and I caught him in time to ease the fall. We were helped to pull him into the aisle. There were four of us by this time—his granddaughter and the Reed "rooter," besides the Canton man and myself.

We carried him into the wide passageway that led to the seats. The Reed young man ran for water, and, finding none, quickly returned with a glass of lemonade (he was a young fellow ready in shifts), and with it we bathed the old man's face.

Presently he came back, by degrees, to the world; he was not conscious, but we could see that he was not going to die.

"He'll be all right in no time," declared the Reed man. "You had better go back and get your seats, and keep mine!"

I assured both men that I could not return for more than a short time, having an engagement for luncheon.

"That's all right," said the Reed man, turning to the Canton man. "I ain't shouting when Foraker comes; you are. You go back and keep my seat; I'll come in later on Hobart."

So the kindly Canton man returned to the conven-

tion for which he was longing, and we remained in our little corner by the window, the young girl fanning the old man, and the young man on the watch for a boy with water. He darted after one; and then the girl turned to me.

No one disturbed us. Below, the traffic of a great city roared up to us and a brass band clanged merrily. The crowd hurried past, drawn by the tidings that "the fight was on"; it choked the outlets and suffocated the galleries.

"He's been that way ever since he read, suddenly, that Blaine was dead," she said, lowering her voice to keep it safe from his failing ears; "he had a kind of a stroke, and ever since he's had the notion that Blaine was alive and was going to be nominated, and his heart was set on going here. Mother was afraid; but when—when he cried to go, I could not help taking him—I didn't know but maybe it might help him; he was such a smart man and such a good man: and he has had trouble about mortgaging the farm; and he worked so hard to get the money back, so mother would feel all right. All through the hot weather he worked, and I guess that's how it happened. You don't think it's hurt him? The doctor said he might go. He told T——, a gentleman friend of mine, who asked him."

"Oh, dear, no," said I; "it has been good for him."

I asked for her address, which fortunately was near, and I offered her the cab that was waiting for me. I had some ado to persuade her to accept it; but when I pointed to her grandfather's pale face she did accept

it, thanking me in a simple but touching way, and, of course, begging me to visit her at Izard, Ohio.

All this while we had been sedulously fanning the old man, who would occasionally open his eyes for a second, but gave no other sign of returning consciousness.

The young Reed man came back with the water. He was bathing the old man's forehead in a skilful and careful way, using my handkerchief, when an uproar of cheering shook the very floor under us, and the rafters overhead.

"Who is it?" the old man inquired feebly.

"Foraker! Foraker!" bellowed the crowd.

"He's nominated him!" muttered the old man; but this time he did not attempt to rise. With a smile of great content he leaned against his granddaughter's strong young frame and listened, while the cheers swelled into a deafening din, and immeasurable tumult of sound, out of which a few strong voices shaped the chorus of the "Battle Cry of Freedom," to be caught up by fifteen thousand throats and pealed through the walls far down the city streets to the vast crowd without.

The young Reed "boomer," carried away by the moment, flung his free hand above his head and yelled defiantly: "Three cheers for the man from Maine!" Instantly he caught at his wits, his color turned, and he lifted an abashed face to the young girl.

"But, really, you know, that ain't giving nothing away," he apologized, plucking up heart. "May I do it again?"

The old partisan's eye lighted. "Now they're shouting! That's like old times! Yes, go it again, boy! Blaine! Blaine! James G. Blaine!"

He let us lead him to the carriage, the rapturous smile still on his lips. The "rooter" and I wormed our way through the crowd back to the seat which the kind Canton man had kept for us.

We were quite like old acquaintances now; and he turned to me at once, "Was there ever a politician or a statesman, since Henry Clay, loved so well as James G. Blaine?"

THE RETURN

BY I. K. FRIEDMAN

Isaac Kahn Friedman (born in Chicago, November 3, 1870) is one of the increasing number of American authors who draw their strength from knowledge of the plain and poor people, and sympathy with their condition. "The Return" is the echo of an old-world tragedy, the murder by an avaricious peasant couple of their own son, who had returned in disguise, after a long absence, to surprise his parents with his wealth. Mr. Friedman has added a realistic effect to the motive by giving it a modern setting in Italian American life, and has concentrated the emotional interest by reducing the murderers to one—and that the mother.

THE RETURN

BY I. K. FRIEDMAN

ANGELO PASCELLA stepped into Rosaura Pascella's wine room, and seating himself at one of his mother's tables, placed his carpet-bag on the floor and called for *pranzo con mezza bottliglia de vino*, dinner with wine. The card-playing, eating, drinking, arguing Italians ceased their diversions long enough to take a look at the new-comer.

He was a swarthy, healthy, prosperous looking fellow, whose twenty-five years perched carelessly on his shoulders, as if perfectly willing to make room for a twenty-sixth. There was nothing in his looks, dress or manner that entitled him to a second glance, and no suspicion of vexing mystery arose in the minds of Rosaura's patrons to spoil the flavor of the *sphagetti importati*, or to interrupt the flow of wine and words and cards.

Madre Pascella, whose small shrewd eyes were boring through the stranger's carpet-sack to inventory the contents thereof, seeing a prospective patron in the stranger, hastened to wait on him herself, after soundly scolding the servant for not paying better attention to the wants of her customers—this rather to impress the stranger than to reprove the servant.

Angelo, on his part, marveled much at the little

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change that had taken place in his mother's appearance in the thirteen long years of his absence from home. She had grown somewhat stouter, the masculine growth on her upper lip was darker and thicker (those who spoke behind her back called it *un mostacchio*), her hair had lost its raven-like blackness, her face was a little more wrinkled, and that was all. Rosaura Pascella came of a stock that withers and dries, rather than dies.

The place, unlike its owner, was much the worse for wear; the plaster on the ceiling and walls was ready at any minute to fall on the floor, and seemed to beg for the support of props to prevent a tumble so disastrous. The floor had sagged under the heavy weight of the refrigerator and the clumsy pine bar; and both bar and refrigerator had arrived at that point of decrepitude where painting and repairing are too expensive to be practicable. The benches, tables and chairs—some minus an arm, some minus a leg, and some minus both—were the same ones around which Antonio had romped and played when a boy.

"Evidently the madre has not prospered since I left home; everything is going to rack and ruin," he reflected on looking around. Then, thinking of his own material success, "I shall put things to rights in less than no time."

When the mother placed the *pranzo* on the table, her son found it difficult to keep from throwing his arms around her, kissing her and crying, *"Mia carissima."* But he held the reward of a more brilliant

and sudden surprise before his eyes, and restrained himself.

He did not know whether to feel sad or glad because she did not recognize him after an absence of only thirteen years. He knew her, forsooth! He gladdened himself with the reflection that he had outhandsomed her recollection, and ate on in silence, his eyes fixed on his plate. Ah! but the dish of spaghetti was fine, a motherly welcome in itself; and he smacked his lips and smiled contentedly. She was standing behind him with her arms folded, waiting for a chance to speak; she saw the smile and broke in abruptly, "How do you like it?"

"Fine," he answered, "just like my mother used to make," and he looked her straight in the eyes.

She bowed acknowledgment like one used to being complimented, and for whom one compliment is of as little value as another.

"I see," said she, pointing to the bag, "that you are from a distance."

"Yes, from New Orleans"—the words slipped from his lips inadvertently and he wished that he could recall them.

"Ehi! New Orleans!" The mere mentioning of the name changed her from an inquisitive questioner into a most voluble informer. She had a son there in the fruit business with her brother. A fine lad he was, too! He had left home when a boy of twelve and had been gone thirteen years. It was her only child; how she yearned to see him again, her boy! He might know him, his name was Angelo Pascella?

Angelo shook his head.

"No?" she thought every Italian in New Orleans must know her boy. He had prospered, he was rich, he was influential. He had promised over and over again in his letters to come home and spend a few days with his old mother, but the years had gone by and still he did not come. Ah! if he only knew the pleasure his return would bring her, but young men were forgetful and—

Some one at the further end of the room called for a bottle of wine, and her chatter was interrupted.

Angelo looked through the room wistfully to see if he could not discover some old friends of his boyhood days. They were all gone, the old familiar faces, or, at least, none of them was there. A feeling of the transitoriness of things, of separation from the life of which he had once been a component part, touched him with a vague sense of loneliness. His coming home had made him homesick, and he yearned to grasp his sack and start for New Orleans again. Then he blamed himself for not revealing his identity—a word from him and presto! all would change; his mother's arms would entwine lovingly about his neck, and his old friends would come crowding on the scene as if raised by magic. He would do it, surprise or no; but the sudden announcement ought to be surprise enough.

A diminutive, round-shouldered, bow-legged Italian entered the room and arrested Angelo's attention. He had seen a face like that somewhere, but he could not associate it with any particular place or time. But

the legs? There was only one pair of legs in the world that bowed like those; surely enough, it must be little Pietro del Re, the tailor. Many an hour had he passed in the little tailor's basement shop, an ever welcome guest, listening to stories and descriptions of Italy and its wars.

He caught Pietro's eye and beckoned to him. "Would he have a glass of wine?" In a few minutes they were talking of the golden memories of the days gone by. Angelo felt his way carefully, and when the opportune moment came he discovered his identity. Pietro gave his head a jerk which made the rings in his ears dance. "What!" he exclaimed, "you don't say, you—!"

The sentence was never finished save in the mind of the speaker, for Angelo clapped his hands over the mouth of the surprised tailor. "Hush!" whispered he, "I want to surprise her, and you will spoil it all." This mysterious action did not escape the attention of the madre, who was watching them from behind the bar.

"And you mean to say that she don't know you?" he jerked his thumb over his shoulder to designate the "she."

Angelo shook his head. "No, but I think I will tell her later, when the others are gone and we are left alone."

Pietro proposed a better scheme. Angelo's was not half dramatic enough to suit the imaginative tailor's conception of what a theatrical surprise should be. Angelo must go directly to bed; and he, Pietro, would

immediately betake himself home. In the morning he would arise early and gather all the old friends, Cassaretto, Barretti, Salvino, De Stefano, and a host of others whom Angelo had known since his boyhood and about whom he had just been questioning Pietro. They would all assemble at the Osteria dell Gallo (the Inn of the Cock), and apprise the madre who her guest really was. Then she would rush upstairs, enter her son's room and have him wake in her arms; and when the mother and son came downstairs the crowd would give them a rousing welcome.

"Come vi piace?" he asked.

Angelo rolled a cigarette, lighted it, and thought awhile. *"Molto moltissimo,"* he answered, blowing the cloud of thin smoke away.

The tailor shook hands, and arose for an immediate transaction of his part of the bargain.

At the doorway Rosaura stopped him—"Who is the man, why did he put his hand over your mouth to prevent you from speaking?"

An imaginative mind is of service in more ways than one; Pietro manufactured a very plausible lie on the spur of the moment. "He is a rich man, a very rich man, his pockets are lined with gold. When he told me how much he had, 'What! so much as that!' I was about to cry, and up goes his hand over my mouth. You see, Madre Pascella, he knows me to be an honest man; of the others he is not so sure. Goodnight."

Rosaura was still reflecting on how much truth there might be in the tailor's lie when Angelo ap-

proached and asked to be shown to his room. Here was an opportunity to make this stranger show the material with which his pockets were lined, and to prove him a Crœsus, or Pietro del Re a liar.

"The rules of the house are to pay in advance," she said authoritatively, her hands on her hips.

The stranger smiled quietly, drew a fat roll of bills from the inside pocket of his vest and paid the amount demanded in a way that said, "And I wouldn't care if it were a little higher."

The sight of it made her eyes ache and the palms of her hands itch. There was more than enough in that one roll to pay her year's rent, and in the morning Carlo Neppi, the landlord, would be around clamoring for his money; and Neppi was terrible when the rent was not ready, all counted out in dimes and quarters and dollar bills—he would throw her into the streets, and give her a shrug of his shoulders for sympathy.

She lit a kerosene lamp, and opened the door that shut the saloon from the winding stairway which led to the lodging-house above. As they were moving down the narrow hallway toward the room designated for Angelo, he gave way to a sudden impulse, caught her round her ample waist and kissed her. "Go away, fool!" she cried, shoving him vigorously against the wall. She entered the room, put the lamp on the wash-stand, and made her exit without even wishing him good-night.

It was the room he had occupied when a boy; the wash-stand, the bed, the stool, all looked as if they

had been waiting for him, and a Murillo Madonna, a cheap, dust-mellowed lithograph, beamed a welcome home from her place on the wall. There was little enough in that bare room about which old memories could cluster; but they clung all the more closely to the small space available, like vines that put forth their creepers to mass their foliage about a single nail in an old wall.

Just below his window, which looked on the street, the signboard (a cock with the inscription "Osteria dell Gallo") was creaking loudly as it swayed back and forth in the wind. Angelo regulated the creaking to the refrain, "Wel-come home, wel-come home," and his imagination made the inanimate cock crow the words softly. The refrain soon lulled him to sleep.

Downstairs Rosaura was bubbling over with impatience; it seemed to her that midnight, the hour for closing, would never come, and that the loiterers would never go.

"It is past twelve; come, pay; it is very late, I must close or disobey the ordinance," she said to Enrico Grassi, who was telling her for the tenth time how Paolo Cherino had cheated him out of the last game of *morra,* and how Paolo, and not he, should pay for the last drinks.

"In a minute, just a minute, and I have done," repeated the excited Enrico. "When a man has only a half thumb and bends it half-way, it would take the devil himself to tell whether it was up or down. 'Four,' says I! 'Three,' says Paolo, 'you pay.' Now Madre, I leave it with you if—"

"I care not whether it was up or down, Paolo has gone and you must pay!" cried the bored and impatient hostess.

"Well," said Enrico, with a shrewd smile, "you are like the rest of them, you are in the conspiracy to cheat me. Charge it!" and out he went with a slam of the door.

"It was worth the price of two glasses of wine to be rid of the fellow," she reflected philosophically, as she locked the door and turned the lamps out.

She moved up the stairs as carefully as if each inch of the way were connected by wire with bells, and the slightest jar would start the bells ringing and awaken some restless sleeper.

When in her room she removed her shoes and walked cautiously, on tiptoe, to the door that divided Angelo's room from her own, and pressed her ear against it. She heard the sleeper's deep and regular breathing, significant of one who has a light heart and an easy conscience for bedfellows. "He sleeps too soundly," she thought, "for a man with so much money."

She drew the bolt quietly, bent her knee against the panel of the door, waited a second in breathless suspense; then pressed forward quickly and turned the knob; the door opened as noiselessly as if the hinges had been oiled.

His bed was just opposite the door, and she could see every line of his youthful face by the light cast from the lamp that she had left burning low on a chair in the centre of her own room.

She advanced to his bedside slowly, slowly; the distance was but a few feet; to her it seemed as many miles. He had his vest buttoned over his woolen nightgown; it was the object of her search, and she noticed it before anything else. She bent over him so closely that she could feel the moisture of his breath on her hot cheek.

As Rosaura stood thus, holding her stiletto in her right hand, and firmly and gently unbuttoning his vest with her left hand, it seemed to her that she had seen the man before. So forcibly did the idea strike her that she paused in the very heat and excitement of the action to scan the sleeper's features more closely.

He turned on his side as if troubled by her searching stare and buried his face in the pillow.

She raised her stiletto, ready to strike if he awoke. His breathing continued regular and rounded as the ticking of an oscillating pendulum.

Then with one quick movement of the stiletto she ripped his vest down the back, and the heavier half of the garment, the half with the purse, she removed by a single tug.

In an over-anxiety to secure her treasure without awakening him, she let the stiletto slip and it pricked him in the back. He awoke with a start. Fearful lest he cry aloud, she grasped him by the throat with her long, knotty, masculine fingers, and the battle began for the supremacy between mother and son.

The son was the stronger, but the mother had all the advantages of position, forewarning and forearming. He used his strong arms for levers and tried to

raise his body to a sitting posture. Her grasp tightened, and he felt the life-breath being choked out of him as she forced him on his back. He swung his left arm out in a half circle and struck her a staggering blow on the temple; she reeled, stretched out her long arm and caught the bed-post to save herself from falling.

Angelo sprang to his feet, and was on the floor in almost the time it took Rosaura's arm to reach out and grasp for support. He recognized his assailant and stood terror-stricken, dumfounded, paralyzed. *"Madre mia, madre mia!"* he gasped plaintively, beseechingly. The stiletto was drawn back, flashed, and leaped straight to his heart.

She crept on her hands and knees to the hall door, opened it and listened. The living were as silent as the murdered; the dead and the sleeping could tell no tales.

Pietro's sleep was by no means as sound as that of Angelo. He tossed about restlessly the whole night, laying his plan of attack for the great surprise on the morrow; for Pietro was a simple soul who made the most of one of those rare opportunities that gave him half a chance to appear of importance in the community.

He had made his plans a score of times, and changed them just as often; he would go for Antonio Salvino first and have him summon Gustavo de Stefano, and Gustavo and Antonio could summon those who lived south of the Osteria; while he, himself, could gather those who lived in another direction.

No, he would go first to Gaetano Negrini's, that would save time, for although Gaetano lived a little further away, he was much the younger man and could move much the quicker. To have them assemble there together at seven o'clock to the minute, that was a task which would require skilful manœuvring! Rather than be one minute late, Pietro preferred being three hours ahead of time, and the dawn had preceded him only by a few minutes when he made his way toward Negrini's domicile.

As he passed the Osteria he was surprised beyond measure to see Rosaura assisting two burly, desperate-appearing Italians (entire strangers to Pietro) to shove a long pine box on a rickety express wagon.

"Something always goes wrong," he growled. "I wonder what business she has to nose about at this hour! Something to do with Angelo, I'll wager. She always finds out everything, the Madre."

"A distinguished-looking visitor we had last night," he began tentatively.

She was so surprised to see him there that she almost let her end of the box fall.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Pietro? And what are you doing around at this time of day?" She shouted some unnecessary directions to the assistants to hide her discomposure.

"I was about to ask the same question of you," answered Pietro guardedly.

"That's my affair," she retorted sharply.

The timid tailor stood abashed, and for want of something better to relieve his embarrassment, he re-

peated abstractedly, "A distinguished-looking visitor we had last night."

She flushed perceptibly and relaxed her hold on the box. "Take care!" cried one of the men.

"What visitor?" She shifted her position so that her back was turned to the interrogator.

"Why, the young man, the good-looking chap with the carpet-bag."

"Oh, he—how should I know who he was? He went away last night." Her dark face flushed again and she felt the blood beat at her temples; she blessed her good sense for having turned her back to his face.

At last the box was on the wagon, and the two desperadoes jumped on the seat and drove rapidly toward the south.

"Gone away! A nice trick to serve me! All my pains for nothing. I wonder if she tells the truth?" he muttered.

Rosaura stood on the edge of the curb watching the wagon until it passed from sight, then she turned toward the house. Pietro stood thinking what tactics he would employ to gain the truth.

"You there yet?" she said, turning around. "I thought you had gone long ago."

"I—I am not sure whether I understand," answered Pietro, apologetically. "Did you say he went away?"

"Of course I said so. Have you grown deaf; do you want me to repeat it a dozen times?" She was again the master of her expression, or rather of her inexpression.

"Did he tell you where he was going? Did he leave his name? Did he tell you when he would return?"

"Why should he tell me such things; what am I to him? I gave him his lodging and he paid me; there our business ended."

"But, Madre Pascella, I know who he was; I will give you ten guesses, and if you guess right, I will treat to a bottle of your best when he returns; and if you don't guess the treat is yours. Come, now," said Pietro in one breath, anxious to surprise Rosaura and have a part of his glory at least, since the full measure had been denied him.

The blood left her dark cheeks and she blanched visibly. Had he suspected something? Was he trying to bulldoze her into a confession and hush-money? She would show him with what kind of a *man* he was dealing.

"Guess, guess! Do you think I have nothing better to do than to stand here on the sidewalk and waste my precious time guessing with an old fool when I have breakfast to get for twenty?" She pushed him to one side and started toward the door.

The awed tailor (it takes nine tailors to make a man, the world over), fearing lest some one else, waiting inside with the surprise all ready, might cheat him out of his hard-earned reward, and seeing his dream of glory fade into nothingness, hastened to say: "Madre Pascella, it was your son Angelo; he told me so last night in the wine room. That's why

he put his hand over my mouth. 'Angelo, you!' I was about to cry. 'Hush, you fool,' says he, and up goes his hand over my mouth. Yes, it was Angelo, and I alone am in the secret; in me alone—"

"Dio del Cielo!" cried Rosaura, and fell swooning to the ground.

A PURPLE RHODODENDRON

BY JOHN FOX, JR.

John Fox, Jr. (born in Bourbon County, Kentucky, in 1863) has achieved deserved popularity by strong, direct character studies of the original types to be found in his native State. These are generally "mountain men" of the backwoods regions, where the vendetta still flourishes; but occasionally, as in the present selection, Mr. Fox presents a type of the "Kentucky gentleman," whom the abnormally developed sentiment of chivalry, in combination with habits of self-indulgence, brings to a tragic though quixotic end.

A PURPLE RHODODENDRON

BY JOHN FOX, JR.

THE purple rhododendron is rare. Up in the Gap here, Bee Rock, hung out over Roaring Rock, blossoms with it—as a gray cloud purples with the sunrise. This rock was tossed lightly on edge when the earth was young, and stands vertical. To get the flowers you climb the mountain to one side, and, balancing on the rock's thin edge, slip down by roots and past rattlesnake dens till you hang out over the water and reach for them. To avoid snakes it is best to go when it is cool, at daybreak.

I know but one other place in this southwest corner of Virginia where there is another bush of purple rhododendron, and one bush only is there. This hangs at the throat of a peak not far away, whose ageless gray head is bent over a ravine that sinks like a spear thrust into the side of the mountain. Swept only by high wind and eagle wings as this is, I yet knew one man foolhardy enough to climb to it for a flower. He brought one blossom down: and to this day I do not know that it was not the act of a coward; yes, though Grayson did it, actually smiling all the way from peak to ravine, and though he was my best friend—best loved then and since—I believe he was the strangest

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man I have ever known, and I say this with thought; for his eccentricities were sincere. In all he did I can not remember having even suspected anything theatrical but once.

We were all Virginians or Kentuckians at the Gap, and Grayson was a Virginian. You might have guessed that he was a Southerner from his voice and from the way he spoke of women—but no more. Otherwise, he might have been a Moor, except for his color, which was about the only racial characteristic he had. He had been educated abroad and, after the English habit, had traveled everywhere. And yet I can imagine no more lonely way between the eternities than the path Grayson trod alone.

He came to the Gap in the early days, and just why he came I never knew. He had studied the iron question a long time, he told me, and what I thought reckless speculation was, it seems, deliberate judgment to him. His money "in the dirt," as the phrase was, Grayson got him a horse and rode the hills and waited. He was intimate with nobody. Occasionally he would play poker with us and sometimes he drank a good deal, but liquor never loosed his tongue. At poker his face told as little as the back of his cards, and he won more than admiration—even from the Kentuckians, who are artists at the game; but the money went from a free hand, and, after a diversion like this, he was apt to be moody and to keep more to himself than ever. Every fortnight or two he would disappear, always over Sunday. In three or four days he would turn up again, black with brooding, and then he was the last

man to leave the card-table or he kept away from it altogether. Where he went nobody knew; and he was not the man anybody would question.

One night two of us Kentuckians were sitting in the club, and from a home paper I read aloud the rumored engagement of a girl we both knew—who was famous for beauty in the Bluegrass, as was her mother before her and the mother before her—to an unnamed Virginian. Grayson sat near, smoking a pipe; and when I read the girl's name I saw him take the meerschaum from his lips, and I felt his eyes on me. It was a mystery how, but I knew at once that Grayson was the man. He sought me out after that and seemed to want to make friends. I was willing, or rather he made me more than willing; for he was irresistible to me, as I imagine he would have been to anybody. We got to walking together and riding together at night, and we were soon rather intimate; but for a long time he never so much as spoke the girl's name. Indeed, he kept away from the Bluegrass for nearly two months; but when he did go he stayed a fortnight.

This time he came for me as soon as he got back to the Gap. It was just before midnight, and we went as usual back to Imboden Hill, through moon-dappled beeches, and Grayson turned off into the woods where there was no path, both of us silent. We rode through tremulous, shining leaves—Grayson's horse choosing a way for himself—and, threshing through a patch of high, strong weeds, we circled past an amphitheatre of deadened trees whose crooked arms were tossed out into the moonlight, and halted on the spur. The moon

was poised over Morris's farm; South Fork was shining under us like a loop of gold, the mountains lay about in tranquil heaps, and the moon-mist rose luminous between them. There Grayson turned to me with an eager light in his eyes that I had never seen before.

"This has a new beauty to-night!" he said; and then "I told her about you, and she said that she used to know you—well." I was glad my face was in shadow —I could hardly keep back a brutal laugh—and Grayson, unseeing, went on to speak of her as I had never heard any man speak of any woman. In the end, he said that she had just promised to be his wife. I answered nothing. Other men, I knew, had said that with the same right, perhaps, and had gone from her to go back no more. And I was one of them. Grayson had met her at White Sulphur five years before, and had loved her ever since. She had known it from the first, he said, and I guessed then what was going to happen to him. I marveled, listening to the man, for it was the star of constancy in her white soul that was most lustrous to him—and while I wondered the marvel became a commonplace. Did not every lover think his loved one exempt from the frailty that names other women? There is no ideal of faith or of purity that does not live in countless women to-day. I believe that; but could I not recall one friend who walked with Divinity through pine woods for one immortal spring, and who, being sick to death, was quite finished —learning her at last? Did I not know lovers who believed sacred to themselves, in the name of love, lips that had been given to many another without it? And

now did I not know—but I knew too much, and to Grayson I said nothing.

That spring the "boom" came. Grayson's property quadrupled in value and quadrupled again. I was his lawyer, and I pleaded with him to sell; but Grayson laughed. He was not speculating; he had invested on judgment; he would sell only at a certain figure. The figure was actually reached, and Grayson let half go. The boom fell, and Grayson took the tumble with a jest. It would come again in the autumn, he said, and he went off to meet the girl at White Sulphur.

I worked right hard that summer, but I missed him, and I surely was glad when he came back. Something was wrong; I saw it at once. He did not mention her name, and for a while he avoided even me. I sought him then, and gradually I got him into our old habit of walking up into the Gap and of sitting out after supper on a big rock in the valley, listening to the run of the river and watching the afterglow over the Cumberland, the moon rise over Wallen's Ridge and the stars come out. Waiting for him to speak, I learned for the first time then another secret of his wretched melancholy. It was the hopelessness of that time, perhaps, that disclosed it. Grayson had lost the faith of his childhood. Most men do that at some time or other, but Grayson had no business, no profession, no art in which to find relief. Indeed, there was but one substitute possible, and that came like a gift straight from the God whom he denied. Love came, and Grayson's ideals of love, as of everything else, were morbid and quixotic. He believed that he

owed it to the woman he should marry never to have loved another. He had loved but one woman, he said, and he should love but one. I believed him then literally when he said that his love for the Kentucky girl was his religion now—the only anchor left him in his sea of troubles, the only star that gave him guiding light. Without this love, what then?

I had a strong impulse to ask him, but Grayson shivered, as though he divined my thought, and, in some relentless way, our talk drifted to the question of suicide. I was not surprised that he rather defended it. Neither of us said anything new, only I did not like the way he talked. He was too deliberate, too serious, as though he were really facing a possible fact. He had no religious scruples, he said, no family ties; he had nothing to do with bringing himself into life; why—if it was not worth living, not bearable—why should he not end it? He gave the usual authority, and I gave the usual answer. Religion aside, if we did not know that we were here for some purpose, we did not know that we were not, and here we were anyway, and our duty was plain. Desertion was the act of a coward, and that Grayson could not deny.

That autumn the crash of '91 came across the water from England, and Grayson gave up. He went to Richmond, and came back with money enough to pay off his notes, and I think it took nearly all he had. Still, he played poker steadily now—for poker had been resumed when it was no longer possible to gamble in lots—he drank a good deal, and he began just at this time to take a singular interest in our volunteer

police guard. He had always been on hand when there was trouble, and I sha'n't soon forget him the day Senator Mahone spoke, when we were punching a crowd of mountaineers back with cocked Winchesters. He had lost his hat in a struggle with one giant; he looked half crazy with anger, and yet he was white and perfectly cool, and I noticed that he never had to tell a man but once to stand back. Now he was the first man to answer a police whistle. When we were guarding Talt Hall, he always volunteered when there was any unusual risk to run. When we raided the Pound to capture a gang of desperadoes, he insisted on going ahead as spy; and when we got restless lying out in the woods waiting for daybreak, and the captain suggested a charge on the cabin, Grayson was by his side when it was made. Grayson sprang through the door first, and he was the man who thrust his reckless head up into the loft and lighted a match to see if the murderers were there. Most of us did foolish things in those days under stress of excitement, but Grayson, I saw, was weak enough to be reckless. His trouble with the girl, whatever it was, was serious enough to make him apparently care little whether he were alive or dead. And still I saw that not yet even had he lost hope. He was having a sore fight with his pride, and he got body-worn and heartsick over it. Of course he was worsted, and in the end, from sheer weakness, he went back to her once more.

I shall never see another face like his when Grayson came back that last time. I never noticed before that there were silver hairs about his temples. He stayed

in his room, and had his meals sent to him. He came out only to ride, and then at night. Waking the third morning at daybreak, I saw him through the window galloping past, and I knew he had spent the night on Black Mountain. I went to his room as soon as I got up, and Grayson was lying across his bed with his face down, his clothes on, and in his right hand was a revolver. I reeled into a chair before I had strength enough to bend over him, and when I did I found him asleep. I left him as he was, and I never let him know that I had been to his room; but I got him out on the rock again that night, and I turned our talk again to suicide. I said it was small, mean, cowardly, criminal, contemptible! I was savagely in earnest, and Grayson shivered and said not a word. I thought he was in better mind after that. We got to taking night rides again, and I stayed as closely to him as I could, for times got worse and trouble was upon everybody. Notes fell thicker than snowflakes, and, through the foolish policy of the company, foreclosures had to be made. Grayson went to the wall like the rest of us. I asked him what he had done with the money he had made. He had given away a great deal to poorer kindred; he had paid his dead father's debts; he had played away a good deal, and he had lost the rest. His faith was still imperturbable. He had a dozen rectangles of "dirt," and from these, he said, it would all come back some day. Still, he felt the sudden poverty keenly, but he faced it as he did any other physical fact in life—dauntless. He used to be fond of saying that no one thing could make him miserable. But he

would talk with mocking earnestness about some much dreaded combination; and a favorite phrase of his—which got to have peculiar significance—was "the cohorts of hell," who closed in on him when he was sick and weak, and who fell back when he got well. He had one strange habit, too, from which I got comfort. He would deliberately walk into and defy any temptation that beset him. That was the way he strengthened himself, he said. I knew what his temptation was now, and I thought of this habit when I found him asleep with his revolver, and I got hope from it now, when the dreaded combination (whatever that was) seemed actually to have come.

I could see now that he got worse daily. He stopped his mockeries, his occasional fits of reckless gayety. He stopped poker—resolutely—he couldn't afford to lose now; and, what puzzled me, he stopped drinking. The man simply looked tired, always hopelessly tired; and I could believe him sincere in all his foolish talk about his blessed Nirvana: which was the peace he craved, which was end enough for him.

Winter broke. May drew near; and one afternoon, when Grayson and I took our walk up through the Gap, he carried along a huge spy-glass of mine, which had belonged to a famous old desperado, who watched his enemies with it from the mountain-tops. We both helped capture him, and I defended him. He was sentenced to hang—the glass was my fee. We sat down opposite Bee Rock, and for the first time Grayson told me of that last scene with her. He spoke without bitterness, and he told me what she said,

word for word, without a breath of blame for her. I do not believe that he judged her at all; she did not know—he always said; she did not *know;* and then, when I opened my lips, Grayson reached silently for my wrist, and I can feel again the warning crush of his fingers, and I say nothing against her now.

I asked Grayson what his answer was.

"I asked her," he said, solemnly, "if she had ever seen a purple rhododendron."

I almost laughed picturing the scene—the girl bewildered by his absurd question—Grayson calm, superbly courteous. It was a mental peculiarity of his—this irrelevancy—and it was like him to end a matter of life and death in just that way.

"I told her I should send her one. I am waiting for them to come out," he added; and he lay back with his head against a stone and sighted the telescope on a dizzy point, about which buzzards were circling.

"There is just one bush of rhododendron up there," he went on. "I saw it looking down from the Point last spring. I imagine it must blossom earlier than that across there on Bee Rock, being always in the sun. No, it's not budding yet," he added, with his eye to the glass. "You see that ledge just to the left? I dropped a big rock from the Point square on a rattler who was sunning himself there last spring. I can see a foothold all the way up the cliff. It can be done," he concluded, in a tone that made me turn sharply upon him.

"Do you really mean to climb up there?" I asked, harshly.

"If it blossoms first up there—I'll get it where it blooms first." In a moment I was angry and half sick with suspicion, for I knew his obstinacy; and then began what I am half ashamed to tell.

Every day thereafter Grayson took that glass with him, and I went along to humor him. I watched Bee Rock, and he that one bush at the throat of the peak —neither of us talking over the matter again. It was uncanny, that rivalry—sun and wind in one spot, sun and wind in another—Nature herself casting the fate of a half-crazed fool with a flower. It was utterly absurd, but I got nervous over it—apprehensive, dismal.

A week later it rained for two days and the water was high. The next day the sun shone, and that afternoon Grayson smiled, looking through the glass, and handed it to me. I knew what I should see. One purple cluster, full blown, was shaking in the wind. Grayson was leaning back in a dream when I let the glass down. A cool breath from the woods behind us brought the odor of roots and of black earth; up in the leaves and sunlight somewhere a wood-thrush was singing, and I saw in Grayson's face what I had not seen for a long time, and that was peace—the peace of stubborn purpose. He did not come for me the next day, nor the next; but the next he did, earlier than usual.

"I am going to get that rhododendron," he said. "I have been half-way up—it can be reached." So had I been half-way up. With nerve and agility the flower could be got, and both these Grayson had. If

he had wanted to climb up there and drop, he could have done it alone, and he would have known that I should have found him. Grayson was testing himself again, and, angry with him for the absurdity of the thing and with myself for humoring it, but still not sure of him, I picked up my hat and went. I swore to myself silently that it was the last time I should pay any heed to his whims. I believed this would be the last. The affair with the girl was over. The flower sent, I knew Grayson would never mention her name again.

Nature was radiant that afternoon. The mountains had the leafy luxuriance of June, and a rich, sunlit haze drowsed on them between the shadows starting out over the valley and the clouds so white that the blue of the sky looked dark. Two eagles shot across the mouth of the Gap as we neared it, and high beyond buzzards were sailing over Grayson's rhododendron.

I went up the ravine with him and I climbed up behind him—Grayson going very deliberately and whistling softly. He called down to me when he reached the shelf that looked half-way.

"You mustn't come any further than this," he said. "Get out on that rock and I'll drop them down to you."

Then he jumped from the ledge and caught the body of a small tree close to the roots, and my heart sank at such recklessness and all my fears rose again. I scrambled hastily to the ledge, but I could get no further. I might possibly make the jump he had

made—but how should I ever get back? How would he? I called angrily after him now, and he wouldn't answer me. I called him a fool, a coward; I stamped the ledge like a child—but Grayson kept on, foot after hand, with stealthy caution, and the purple cluster nodding down at him made my head whirl. I had to lie down to keep from tumbling from the ledge; and there on my side, gripping a pine bush, I lay looking up at him. He was close to the flowers now, and just before he took the last upward step he turned and looked down that awful height with as calm a face as though he could have dropped and floated unhurt to the ravine beneath.

Then with his left hand he caught the ledge to the left, strained up, and, holding thus, reached out with his right. The hand closed about the cluster, and the twig was broken. Grayson gave a great shout then. He turned his head as though to drop them, and, that far away, I heard the sibilant whir of rattles. I saw a snake's crest within a yard of his face, and, my God! I saw Grayson loose his left hand to guard it! The snake struck at his arm, and Grayson reeled and caught back once at the ledge with his left hand. He caught once, I say, to do him full justice; then, without a word, he dropped—and I swear there was a smile on his face when he shot down past me into the trees.

I found him down there in the ravine with nearly every bone in his body crushed. His left arm was under him, and outstretched in his right hand was

the shattered cluster, with every blossom gone but one. One white half of his face was unmarked, and on it was still the shadow of a smile. I think it meant more than that Grayson believed that he was near peace at last. It meant that Fate had done the deed for him and that he was glad. Whether he would have done it himself, I do not know; and that is why I say that though Grayson brought the flower down —smiling from peak to ravine—I do not know that he was not, after all, a coward.

That night I wrote to the woman in Kentucky. I told her that Grayson had fallen from a cliff while climbing for flowers; and that he was dead. Along with these words, I sent a purple rhododendron.

THE TIPSTER

BY EDWIN LEFEVRE

Edwin Lefevre (born in Colon, South America, January 23, 1871, of an American father and South American mother) studied mining engineering at Lehigh University, but on leaving college entered into financial journalism. Being fond of good stories, he collected many anecdotes of the sharp deals of Wall Street financiers, and this stimulated his invention to originate fictitious characters and incidents having a basis in human nature acted upon by the passion of gain. "The Tipster" has been selected by the author for reproduction in the present series as representative of his work. It first appeared in "McClure's Magazine."

THE TIPSTER

BY EDWIN LEFEVRE

I

GILMARTIN was still laughing professionally at the prospective buyer's funny story when the telephone on his desk buzzed. He said: "Excuse me for a minute, old man," to the customer —Hopkins, the Connecticut manufacturer.

"Hello; who is this?" he spoke into the transmitter. "Oh, how are you?—Yes—I was out—Is that so?—Too bad—Too bad—Yes; just my luck to be out. I might have known it!—Do you think so?—Well, then, sell the 200 Occidental common—You know best—What about Trolley?—Hold on?—All right; just as you say—I hope so—I don't like to lose, and—Ha! ha!—I guess so—Good-by."

"It's from my brokers," explained Gilmartin, hanging up the receiver. "I'd have saved five hundred dollars if I had been here at half-past ten. They called me up to advise me to sell out, and the price is off over three points. I could have got out at a profit this morning; but no, sir; not I. I had to be away, trying to buy some camphor."

Hopkins was impressed. Gilmartin perceived it and went on, with an air of comical wrath which he thought was preferable to indifference: "It isn't the

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money I mind so much as the tough luck of it. I didn't make my trade in camphor after all and I lost in stocks, when if I'd only waited five minutes more in the office I'd have got the message from my brokers and saved my five hundred. Expensive, my time is, eh?" with a woful shake of the head.

"But you're ahead of the game, aren't you?" asked the customer, interestedly.

"Well, I guess yes. Just about twelve thousand."

That was more than Gilmartin had made; but having exaggerated, he immediately felt very kindly disposed toward the Connecticut man.

"Whew!" whistled Hopkins, admiringly. Gilmartin experienced a great tenderness toward him. The lie was made stingless by the customer's credulity. This brought a smile of subtle relief to Gilmartin's lips. He was a pleasant-faced, pleasant-voiced man of three-and thirty. He exhaled health, contentment, neatness, and an easy conscience. Honesty and good-nature shone in his eyes. People liked to shake hands with him. It made his friends talk of his lucky star; and they envied him.

"I bought this yesterday for my wife; took it out of a little deal in Trolley," he told Hopkins, taking a small jewel-box from one of the desk's drawers. It contained a diamond ring, somewhat showy, but obviously quite expensive. Hopkins's semi-envious admiration made Gilmartin add, genially: "What do you say to lunch? I feel I am entitled to a glass of 'fizz' to forget my bad luck of this morning." Then, in an

exaggeratedly apologetic tone: "Nobody likes to lose five hundred dollars on an empty stomach!"

"She'll be delighted, of course," said Hopkins, thinking of Mrs. Gilmartin. Mrs. Hopkins loved jewelry.

"She's the nicest little woman that ever lived. Whatever is mine is hers; and what's hers is her own. Ha! ha! But," becoming nicely serious, "all that I'll make out of the stock market I'm going to put away for her, in her name. She can take better care of it than I; and, besides, she's entitled to it, anyhow, for being so nice to me."

That is how he told what a good husband he was. He felt so pleased over it that he went on, sincerely regretful: "She's visiting friends in Pennsylvania or I'd ask you to dine with us." And they went to a fashionable restaurant together.

Day after day Gilmartin thought persistently that Maiden Lane was too far from Wall Street. There came a week in which he could have made four very handsome "turns" had he but been in the brokers' office. He was out on business for his firm and when he returned the opportunity had gone, leaving behind it vivid visions of what might have been; also the conviction that time, tide, and the ticker wait for no man. Instead of buying and selling quinine and balsams and essential oils for Maxwell & Kip, drug brokers and importers, he decided to make the buying and selling of stocks and bonds his exclusive business. The hours were easy; the profits would be great. He would make enough to live on. He would not let the Street take

away what it had given. That was the great secret: to know when to quit! He would be content with a moderate amount, wisely invested in gilt-edged bonds. And then he would bid the Street good-by forever.

Force of long business custom and the indefinable fear of new ventures for a time fought successfully his increasing ticker-fever. But one day his brokers wished to speak to him, to urge him to sell out his entire holdings, having been advised of an epoch-making resolution by Congress. They had received the news in advance from a Washington customer. Other brokers had important connections in the Capital and therefore there was no time to lose. They dared not assume the responsibility of selling him out without his permission. Five minutes—five eternities!—passed before they could talk by telephone with him; and when he gave his order to sell, the market had broken five or six points. The news was "out." The news agencies' slips were in the brokers' offices and half of Wall Street knew. Instead of being among the first ten sellers Gilmartin was among the second hundred.

II

The clerks gave him a farewell dinner. All were there, even the head office-boy to whom the two-dollar subscription was no light matter. The man who probably would succeed Gilmartin as manager, Jenkins, acted as toastmaster. He made a witty speech which ended with a neatly turned compliment. Moreover he seemed sincerely sorry to bid good-by to the

man whose departure meant promotion—which was the nicest compliment of all. And the other clerks—old Williamson, long since ambition-proof; and young Hardy, bitten ceaselessly by it; and midde-aged Jameson, who knew he could run the business much better than Gilmartin; and Baldwin, who never thought of business in or out of the office—all told him how good he had been and related corroborative anecdotes that made him blush and the others cheer; and how sorry they were he would no longer be with them, but how glad he was going to do so much better by himself; and they hoped he would not "cut" them when he met them after he had become a great millionaire. And Gilmartin felt his heart grow soft and feelings not all of happiness came over him. Danny, the dean of the office boys, whose surname was known only to the cashier, rose and said, in the tones of one speaking of a dear departed friend: "He was the best man in the place. He always was all right." Everybody laughed; whereupon Danny went on, with a defiant glare at the others: "I'd work for him for nothin' if he'd want me, instead of gettin' ten a week from any one else." And when they laughed the harder at this he said, stoutly: "Yes, I would!" His eyes filled with tears at their incredulity, which he feared might be shared by Mr. Gilmartin. But the toastmaster rose very gravely and said: "What's the matter with Danny?" And all shouted in unison: "He's all right!" with a cordiality so heartfelt that Danny smiled and sat down, blushing happily. And crusty Jameson, who knew he could run the business so much better than Gilmartin, stood

up—he was the last speaker—and began: "In the ten years I've worked with Gilmartin, we've had our differences and—well—I—well—er—oh, DAMN IT!" and walked quickly to the head of the table and shook hands violently with Gilmartin for fully a minute, while all the others looked on in silence.

Gilmartin had been eager to go to Wall Street. But this leave-taking made him sad. The old Gilmartin who had worked with these men was no more and the new Gilmartin felt sorry. He had never stopped to think how much they cared for him nor indeed how very much he cared for them. He told them, very simply, he did not expect ever again to spend such pleasant years anywhere as at the old office; and as for his spells of ill-temper—oh, yes they needn't shake their heads; he knew he often was irritable—he had meant well and trusted they would forgive him. If he had his life to live over again he would try really to deserve all that they had said of him on this evening. And he was very, very sorry to leave them. "Very sorry, boys; very sorry. *Very* sorry!" he finished lamely, with a wistful smile. He shook hands with each man—a strong grip, as though he were about to go on a journey from which he might never return —and in his heart of hearts there was a new doubt of the wisdom of going to Wall Street. But it was too late to draw back.

They escorted him to his house. They wished to be with him to the last possible minute.

III

Everybody in the drug trade seemed to think that Gilmartin was on the highroad to Fortune. Those old business acquaintances and former competitors whom he happened to meet in the street-cars or in theatre lobbies always spoke to him as to a millionaire-to-be, in what they imagined was correct Wall Street jargon, to show him that they too knew something of the great game. But their efforts made him smile with a sense of superiority, at the same time that their admiration for his cleverness and their good-natured envy for his luck made his soul thrill joyously. Among his new friends in Wall Street also he found much to enjoy. The other customers—some of them very wealthy men—listened to his views regarding the market as attentively as he, later, felt it his polite duty to listen to theirs. The brokers themselves treated him as a "good fellow." They cajoled him into trading often—every one hundred shares he bought or sold meant $12.50 to them—and when he won, they praised his unerring discernment. When he lost they soothed him by scolding him for his recklessness—just as a mother will treat her three-year-old's fall as a great joke in order to deceive the child into laughing at its misfortune. It was an average office with an average clientèle.

From ten to three they stood before the quotation board and watched a quick-witted boy chalk the price changes, which one or another of the customers read aloud from the tape as it came from the ticker. The

higher stocks went the more numerous the customers became, being allured in great flocks to the Street by the tales of their friends, who had profited greatly by the rise. All were winning, for all were buying stocks in a bull market. They resembled each other marvelously, these men who differed so greatly in cast of features and complexion and age. Life to all of them was full of joy. The very ticker sounded mirthful; its clicking told of golden jokes. And Gilmartin and the other customers laughed heartily at the mildest of stories without even waiting for the point of the joke. At times their fingers clutched the air happily, as if they actually felt the good money the ticker was presenting to them. They were all neophytes at the great game—lambkins who were bleating blithely to inform the world what clever and formidable wolves they were. Some of them had sustained occasional losses; but these were trifling compared with their winnings.

When the slump came all were heavily committed to the bull side. It was a bad slump. It was so unexpected—by the lambs—that all of them said, very gravely, it came like a thunderclap out of a clear sky. While it lasted, that is, while the shearing of the flock was proceeding, it was very uncomfortable. Those same joyous, winning stock-gamblers, with beaming faces, of the week before, were fear-clutched, losing stock-gamblers, with livid faces, on what they afterward called the day of the panic. It really was only a slump; rather sharper than usual. Too many lambs had been over-speculating. The wholesale dealers in securities—and insecurities—held very little of their

own wares, having sold them to the lambs, and wanted them back now—cheaper. The customers' eyes, as on happier days, were intent on the quotation board. Their dreams were rudely shattered; the fast horses some had all but bought joined the steam yachts others almost had chartered. The beautiful homes they had been building were torn down in the twinkling of an eye. And the demolisher of dreams and dwellings was the ticker, that instead of golden jokes was now clicking financial death.

They could not take their eyes from the board before them. Their own ruin, told in mournful numbers by the little machine, fascinated them. To be sure, poor Gilmartin said: "I've changed my mind about Newport. I guess I'll spend the summer on my own *Hotel de Roof!*" And he grinned; but he grinned alone. Wilson, the dry goods man, who laughed so joyously at everybody's jokes, was now watching, as if under a hypnotic spell, the lips of the man who sat on the high stool beside the ticker and called out the prices to the quotation boy. Now and again Wilson's own lips made curious grimaces, as if speaking to himself. Brown, the slender, pale-faced man, was outside in the hall, pacing to and fro. All was lost, including honor. And he was afraid to look at the ticker, afraid to hear the prices shouted, yet hoping—for a miracle! Gilmartin came out from the office, saw Brown and said, with sickly bravado: "I held out as long as I could. But they got *my* ducats. A sporting life comes high, I tell you!" But Brown did not heed him, and Gilmartin pushed the elevator button

impatiently and cursed at the delay. He not only had lost the "paper" profits he had accumulated during the bull market, but all his savings of years had crumbled away beneath the strokes of the ticker that day. It was the same with all. They would not take a small loss at first, but had held on, in the hope of a recovery that would "let them out even." And prices had sunk and sunk until the loss was so great that it seemed only proper to hold on, if need be a year, for sooner or later prices must come back. But the break "shook them out," and prices went just so much lower because so many people had to sell, whether they would or not.

IV

After the slump most of the customers returned to their legitimate business—sadder, but it is to be feared not much wiser men. Gilmartin, after the first numbing shock, tried to learn of fresh opportunities in the drug business. But his heart was not in his search. There was the shame of confessing defeat in Wall Street so soon after leaving Maiden Lane; but far stronger than this was the effect of the poison of gambling. If it was bad enough to be obliged to begin lower than he had been at Maxwell & Kip's, it was worse to condemn himself to long weary years of work in the drug business when his reward, if he remained strong and healthy, would consist merely in being able to save a few thousands. But a few lucky weeks in the stock market would win him back all he had lost—and more!

He should have begun in a small way while he was learning to speculate. He saw it now very clearly. Every one of his mistakes had been due to inexperience. He had imagined he knew the market. But it was only now that he really knew it, and therefore it was only now, after the slump had taught him so much, that he could reasonably hope to succeed. His mind, brooding over his losses, definitely dismissed as futile the resumption of the purchase and sale of drugs, and dwelt persistently on the sudden acquisition of stock market wisdom. Properly applied, this wisdom ought to mean much to him. In a few weeks he was again spending his days before the quotation board, gossiping with those customers who had survived, giving and receiving advice. And as time passed the grip of Wall Street on his soul grew stronger until it strangled all other aspirations. He could talk, think, dream of nothing but stocks. He could not read the newspapers without thinking how the market would "take" the news contained therein. If a huge refinery burned down, with a loss to the "Trust" of $4,000,000, he sighed because he had not foreseen the catastrophe and had sold Sugar short. If a strike by the men of the Suburban Trolley Company led to violence and destruction of life and property, he cursed an unrelenting Fate because he had not had the prescience to "put out" a thousand shares of Trolley. And he constantly calculated to the last fraction of a point how much money he would have made if he had sold short just before the calamity at the very top prices and had covered his stock at the

bottom. Had he only known! The atmosphere of the Street, the odor of speculation surrounded him on all sides, enveloped him like a fog, from which the things of the outside world appeared as though seen through a veil. He lived in the district where men do not say "Good-morning" on meeting one another, but "How's the market?" or, when one asks: "How do you feel?" receives for an answer: "Bullish!" or "Bearish!" instead of a reply regarding the state of health.

At first, after the fatal slump, Gilmartin importuned his brokers to let him speculate on credit, in a small way. They did. They were kindly enough men and sincerely wished to help him. But luck ran against him. With the obstinacy of unsuperstitious gamblers he insisted on fighting Fate. He was a bull in a bear market; and the more he lost the more he thought the inevitable "rally" in prices was due. He bought in expectation of it and lost again and again, until he owed the brokers a greater sum than he could possibly pay; and they refused point blank to give him credit for another cent, disregarding his vehement entreaties to buy a last hundred, just one more chance, the last, because he would be sure to win. And, of course, the long-expected happened and the market went up with a rapidity that made the Street blink; and Gilmartin figured that had not the brokers refused his last order, he would have made enough to pay off the indebtedness and have left, in addition, $2,950; for he would have "pyramided" on the way up. He showed the brokers his figures,

accusingly, and they had some words about it and he left the office, almost tempted to sue the firm for conspiracy with intent to defraud; but decided that it was "another of Luck's sockdolagers" and let it go at that, gambler-like.

When he returned to the brokers' office—the next day—he began to speculate in the only way he could —vicariously. Smith, for instance, who was long of 500 St. Paul at 125, took less interest in the deal than did Gilmartin, who thenceforth assiduously studied the news slips and sought information on St. Paul all over the Street, listening thrillingly to tips and rumors regarding the stock, suffering keenly when the price declined, laughing and chirruping blithely if the quotations moved upward, exactly as though it were his own stock. In a measure it was as an anodyne to his ticker fever. Indeed, in some cases his interest was so poignant and his advice so frequent—he would speak of *our* deal—that the lucky winner gave him a small share of his spoils, which Gilmartin accepted without hesitation—he was beyond pride-wounding by now—and promptly used to back some miniature deal of his own on the Consolidated Exchange or even in "Percy's"—a dingy little bucket shop, where they took orders for two shares of stock on a margin of 1%; that is, where a man could bet as little as two dollars.

Later, it often came to pass that Gilmartin would borrow a few dollars when the customers were not trading actively. The amounts he borrowed diminished by reason of the increasing frequency of their refusals. Finally, he was asked to stay away from

the office where once he had been an honored and pampered customer.

He became a Wall Street "has been" and could be seen daily on New Street, back of the Consolidated Exchange, where the "put" and "call" brokers congregate. The tickers in the saloons nearby fed his gambler's appetite. From time to time luckier men took him into the same be-tickered saloons, where he ate at the free lunch counters and drank beer and talked stocks and listened to the lucky winners' narratives with lips tremulous with readiness to smile and grimace. At times the gambler in him would assert itself and he would tell the lucky winners, wrathfully, how the stock he wished to buy but couldn't the week before had risen 18 points. But they, saturated with their own ticker fever, would nod absently, their soul's eyes fixed on some quotation-to-be; or they would not nod at all, but in their eagerness to look at the tape, from which they had been absent two long minutes, would leave him without a single word of consolation or even of farewell.

V

One day, in New Street, he overheard a very well-known broker tell another that Mr. Sharpe was "going to move up Pennsylvania Central right away." The overhearing of the conversation was a bit of rare good luck that raised Gilmartin from his sodden apathy and made him hasten to his brother-in-law, who kept a grocery store in Brooklyn. He implored Griggs to go to a broker and buy as much Pennsyl-

vania Central as he could—that is, if he wished to live in luxury the rest of his life. Sam Sharpe was going to put it up. Also, he borrowed ten dollars.

Griggs was tempted. He debated with himself many hours, and at length yielded with misgivings. He took his savings and bought one hundred shares of Pennsylvania Central at 64, and began to neglect his business in order to study the financial pages of the newspapers. Little by little Gilmartin's whisper set in motion within him the wheels of a ticker that printed on his day-dreams the mark of the dollar. His wife, seeing him preoccupied, thought business was bad; but Griggs denied it, confirming her worst fears. Finally, he had a telephone put in his little shop, to be able to talk to his broker.

Gilmartin, with the ten dollars he had borrowed, promptly bought ten shares in a bucket shop at 63⅞; the stock promptly went to 62⅞; he was promptly "wiped"; and the stock promptly went back to 64½.

On the next day a fellow-customer of Gilmartin of old days invited him to have a drink. Gilmartin resented the man's evident prosperity. He felt indignant at the ability of the other to buy hundreds of shares. But the liquor soothed him, and in a burst of mild remorse he told Smithers, after an apprehensive look about him as if he feared some one might overhear: "I'll tell you something, on the dead q. t., for your own benefit."

"Fire away!"

"Pa. Cent. is going 'way up."

"Yes?" said Smithers, calmly.

"Yes; it will cross par sure."

"Umph!" between munches of a pretzel.

"Yes. Sam Sharpe told"—Gilmartin was on the point of saying a "friend of mine," but caught himself and went on, impressively—"told me, yesterday, to buy Pa. Cent., as he had accumulated his full line, and was ready to whoop it up. And you know what Sharpe is," he finished, as if he thought Smithers was familiar with Sharpe's powers.

"Is that so?" nibbled Smithers.

"Why, when Sharpe makes up his mind to put up a stock, as he intends to do with Pa. Cent., nothing on earth can stop him. He told me he would make it cross par within sixty days. This is no hearsay, no tip. It's cold facts. I don't *hear* it's going up; I don't *think* it's going up; I *know* it's going up. Understand?" And he shook his right forefinger with a hammering motion.

In less than five minutes Smithers was so wrought up that he bought 500 shares and promised solemnly not to "take his profits," *i. e.* sell out, until Gilmartin said the word. Then they had another drink and another look at the ticker.

"You want to keep in touch with me," was Gilmartin's parting shot. "I'll tell you what Sharpe tells me. But you must keep it quiet," with a sidewise nod that pledged Smithers to honorable secrecy.

Had Gilmartin met Sharpe face to face, he would not have known who was before him.

Shortly after he left Smithers he buttonholed another acquaintance, a young man who thought he

knew Wall Street, and therefore had a hobby—manipulation. No one could induce him to buy stocks by telling him how well the companies were doing, how bright the prospects, etc. That was bait for "suckers," not for clever young stock operators. But any one, even a stranger, who said that "they"—the perennially mysterious "they," the "big men," the mighty "manipulators" whose life was one prolonged conspiracy to pull the wool over the public's eyes—"they" were going to "jack up" these or the other shares, was welcomed and his advice acted upon. Young Freeman believed in nothing but "their" wickedness and "their" power to advance or depress stock values at will. Thinking of his wisdom had given him a chronic sneer.

"You're just the man I was looking for," said Gilmartin, who hadn't thought of the young man at all.

"Are you a deputy sheriff?"

"No." A slight pause for oratorical effect. "I had a long talk with Sam to-day."

"What Sam?"

"Sharpe. The old boy sent for me. He was in mighty good humor too. Tickled to death. He might well be—he's got 60,000 shares of Pennsylvania Central. And there's going to be from 50 to 60 points profit in it."

"H'm!" sniffed Freeman, sceptically, yet impressed by the change in Gilmartin's attitude from the money-borrowing humility of the previous week to the confident tone of a man with a straight tip. Sharpe was notoriously kind to his old friends—rich or poor.

"I was there when the papers were signed," Gilmartin said, hotly. "I was going to leave the room, but Sam told me I needn't. I can't tell you what it is about; really I can't. But he's simply going to put the stock above par. It's 64½ now, and you know and I know that by the time it is 75 the newspapers will all be talking about inside buying; and at 85 everybody will want to buy it on account of important developments; and at 95 there will be millions of bull tips on it and rumors of increased dividends, and people who would not look at it thirty points lower will rush in and buy it by the bushel. Let me know who is manipulating a stock, and to h—l with dividends and earnings. Them's *my* sentiments," with a final hammering nod, as if driving in a profound truth.

"Same here," assented Freeman, cordially. He was attacked on his vulnerable side.

Strange things happen in Wall Street. Sometimes tips come true. It so proved in this case. Sharpe started the stock upward brilliantly—the movement became historic in the Street—and Pa. Cent. soared dizzily and all the newspapers talked of it and the public went mad over it and it touched 80 and 85 and 88 and higher, and then Gilmartin made his brother-in-law sell out and Smithers and Freeman. Their profits were: Griggs, $3,000; Smithers, $15,100; Freeman, $2,750. Gilmartin made them give him a good percentage. He had no trouble with his brother-in-law. Gilmartin told him it was an inviolable Wall Street custom and so Griggs paid, with

an air of much experience in such matters. Freeman was more or less grateful. But Smithers met Gilmartin, and full of his good luck repeated what he had told a dozen men within the hour: "I did a dandy stroke the other day. Pa. Cent. looked to me like higher prices and I bought a wad of it. I've cleaned up a tidy sum," and he looked proud of his own penetration. He really had forgotten that it was Gilmartin who had given him the tip. But not so Gilmartin, who retorted, witheringly:

"Well, I've often heard of folks that you put into good things and they make money and afterward they come to you and tell how damned smart they were to hit it right. But you can't work that on me. I've got witnesses."

"Witnesses?" echoed Smithers, looking cheap. He remembered.

"Yes, wit-ness-es," mimicked Gilmartin, scornfully. "I all but had to get on my knees to make you buy it. And I told you when to sell it, too. The information came to me straight from headquarters and you got the use of it, and now the least you can do is to give me twenty-five hundred dollars."

In the end he accepted eight hundred dollars. He told mutual friends that Smithers had cheated him.

VI

It seemed as though the regeneration of Gilmartin had been achieved when he changed his shabby raiment for expensive clothes. He paid his tradesmen's bills and moved into better quarters. He spent his

money as though he had made millions. One week after he had closed out the deal his friends would have sworn Gilmartin had always been prosperous. That was his exterior. His inner self remained the same —a gambler. He began to speculate again, in the office of Freeman's brokers.

At the end of the second month he had lost not only the $1,200 he had deposited with the firm, but an additional $250 he had given his wife and had been obliged to "borrow" back from her, despite her assurances that he would lose it. This time the slump was really unexpected by all, even by the magnates—the mysterious and all-powerful "they" of Freeman's—so that the loss of the second fortune did not reflect on Gilmartin's ability as a speculator, but on his luck. As a matter of fact, he had been too careful and had sinned from over-timidity at first, only to plunge later and lose all.

As the result of much thought about his losses Gilmartin became a professional tipster. To let others speculate for him seemed the only sure way of winning. He began by advising ten victims—he learned in time to call them clients—to sell Steel Rod preferred, each man 100 shares; and to a second ten he urged the purchase of the same quantity of the same stock. To all he advised taking four points' profit. Not all followed his advice, but the seven clients who sold it made between them nearly $3,000 overnight. His percentage amounted to $287.50. Six bought, and when they lost he told them confidentially how the treachery of a leading member of the pool had

obliged the pool managers to withdraw their support from the stock temporarily, whence the decline. They grumbled; but he assured them that he himself had lost nearly $1,600 of his own on account of the traitor.

For some months Gilmartin made a fair living, but business became very dull. People learned to fight shy of his tips. The persuasiveness was gone from his inside news and from his confidential advice from Sharpe and from his beholding with his own eyes the signing of epoch-making documents. Had he been able to make his customers alternate their winnings and losses he might have kept his trade. But, for example, "Dave" Rossiter, in Stuart & Stern's office, stupidly received the wrong tip six times in succession. It wasn't Gilmartin's fault, but Rossiter's bad luck.

At length, failing to get enough clients in the ticker district itself, Gilmartin was forced to advertise in an afternoon paper, six times a week, and in the Sunday edition of one of the leading morning dailies. They ran like this:

WE MAKE MONEY

for our investors by the best system ever devised. Deal with genuine experts. Two methods of operating; one speculative, the other ensures absolute safety.

NOW

is the time to invest in a certain stock for ten points sure profit. Three points margin will carry it. Remember how correct we have been on other stocks. Take advantage of this move.

IOWA MIDLAND.

Big movement coming in this stock. It's very near at hand. Am waiting daily for word. Will get it in time. Splendid

opportunity to make big money. It costs only a 2-cent stamp to write to me.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION.

Private secretary of banker and stock operator of world-wide reputation has valuable information. I don't wish your money. Use your own broker. All I want is a share of what you will surely make if you follow my advice.

WILL ADVANCE $40 PER SHARE.

A fortune to be made in a railroad stock. Deal pending which will advance same $40 per share within three months. Am in position to keep informed as to developments and the operations of a pool. Parties who will carry for me 100 shares with a New York Stock Exchange house will receive the full benefit of information. Investment safe and sure. Highest references given.

He prospered amazingly. Answers came to him from furniture dealers on Fourth Avenue and dairymen up the State and fruit growers in Delaware and factory workers in Massachusetts and electricians in New Jersey and coal miners in Pennsylvania and shopkeepers and physicians and plumbers and undertakers in towns and cities near and far. Every morning Gilmartin telegraphed to scores of people—at their expense—to sell, and to scores of others to buy the same stocks. And he claimed his commissions from the winners.

Little by little his savings grew; and with them grew his desire to speculate on his own account. It made him irritable not to gamble.

He met Freeman one day in one of his dissatisfied moods. Out of politeness he asked the young cynic the universal query of the Street:

"What do you think of 'em?" He meant stocks.

"What difference does it make what *I* think?" sneered Freeman, with proud humility. "I'm nobody." But he looked as if he did not agree with himself.

"What do you *know?*" pursued Gilmartin mollifyingly.

"I know enough to be long of Gotham Gas. I just bought a thousand shares at 180." He really had bought a hundred only.

"What on?"

"On information. I got it straight from a director of the company. Look here, Gilmartin, I'm pledged to secrecy. But, for your own benefit, I'll just tell you to buy all the Gas you possibly can carry. The deal is on. I know that certain papers were signed last night, and they are almost ready to spring it on the public. They haven't got all the stock they want. When they get it, look out for fireworks."

Gilmartin did not perceive any resemblance between Freeman's tips and his own.

He said, hesitatingly, as though ashamed of his timidity:

"The stock seems pretty high at 180."

"You won't think so when it sells at 250. Gilmartin, I don't *hear* this; I don't *think* it; I *know* it!"

"All right; I'm in," quoth Gilmartin, jovially. He felt a sense of emancipation now that he had made up his mind to resume his speculating. He took every cent of the nine hundred dollars he had made from telling people the same things that Freeman told him now, and bought a hundred Gotham Gas at $185 a share.

Also he telegraphed to all his clients to plunge in the stock.

It fluctuated between 184 and 186 for a fortnight. Freeman daily asseverated that "they" were accumulating the stock. But, one fine day, the directors met, agreed that business was bad, and having sold out most of their own holdings, decided to reduce the dividend rate from 8 to 6 per cent. Gotham Gas broke seventeen points in ten short minutes. Gilmartin lost all he had. He found it impossible to pay for his advertisements. The telegraph companies refused to accept any more "collect" messages. This deprived Gilmartin of his income as a tipster. Griggs had kept on speculating and had lost all his money and his wife's in a little deal in Iowa Midland. All that Gilmartin could hope to get from him was an occasional invitation to dinner. Mrs. Gilmartin, after they were dispossessed for non-payment of rent, left her husband, and went to live with a sister in Newark who did not like Gilmartin.

His clothes became shabby and his meals irregular. But always in his heart, as abiding as an inventor's faith in himself, there dwelt the hope that some day, somehow, he would "strike it rich" in the stock market.

One day he borrowed five dollars from a man who had made five thousand in Cosmopolitan Traction. The stock, the man said, had only begun to go up, and Gilmartin believed it and bought five shares in "Percy's," his favorite bucket shop. The stock began to rise slowly but steadily. The next afternoon

"Percy's" was raided, the proprietor having disagreed with the police as to price.

Gilmartin lingered about New Street, talking with other customers of the raided bucket shop, discussing whether or not it was a "put up job" of old Percy himself, who, it was known, had been losing money to the crowd for weeks past. One by one the victims went away and at length Gilmartin left the ticker district. He walked slowly down Wall Street, then turned up William Street, thinking of his luck. Cosmopolitan Traction had certainly looked like higher prices. Indeed, it seemed to him that he could almost hear the stock shouting, articulately: *"I'm going up, right away, right away!"* If somebody would buy a thousand shares and agree to give him the profits on a hundred, on ten, on one!

But he had not even his carfare. Then he remembered that he had not eaten since breakfast. It did him no good to remember it now. He would have to get his dinner from Griggs in Brooklyn.

"Why," Gilmartin told himself with a burst of curious self-contempt, "I can't even buy a cup of coffee!"

He raised his head and looked about him to find how insignificant a restaurant it was in which he could not buy even a cup of coffee. He had reached Maiden Lane. As his glance ran up and down the north side of that street, it was arrested by the sign:

MAXWELL & KIP

At first he felt but vaguely what it meant. It had grown unfamiliar with absence. The clerks were com-

ing out. Jameson, looking crustier than ever, as though he were forever thinking how much better than Jenkins he could run the business; Danny, some inches taller, no longer an office boy, but spick and span in a blue serge suit and a necktie of the latest style, exhaling health and correctness; Williamson, grown very gray and showing on his face thirty years of routine; Baldwin, happy as of yore at the ending of the day's work, and smiling at the words of Jenkins—Gilmartin's successor, who wore an air of authority, of the habit of command which he had not known in the old days.

Of a sudden Gilmartin was in the midst of his old life. He saw all that he had been, all that he might still be. And he was overwhelmed. He longed to rush to his old associates, to speak to them, to shake hands with them, to be the old Gilmartin. He was about to step toward Jenkins, but stopped abruptly. His clothes were shabby, and he felt ashamed. But, he apologized to himself, he could tell them how he had made a hundred thousand and had lost it. And he even might borrow a few dollars from Jenkins.

Gilmartin turned on his heel with a sudden impulse and walked away from Maiden Lane quickly. All that he thought now was that he would not have them see him in his plight. He felt the shabbiness of his clothes without looking at them. As he walked, a great sense of loneliness came over him.

He was back in Wall Street. At the head of the Street was old Trinity; to the right the Sub-Treasury; to the left the Stock Exchange.

From Maiden Lane to the Lane of the Ticker—such had been his life.

"If I could only buy some Cosmopolitan Traction!" he said. Then he walked forlornly northward, to the great Bridge, on his way to Brooklyn, to eat with Griggs, the ruined grocery man.

AFTER THE BATTLE

BY JOSEPH A. ALTSHELER

Joseph Alexander Altsheler (born at Three Springs, Ky., April 29, 1862), one of the leading writers of American historical fiction, is here represented by a story only generally historic in its scene—any battlefield in the Civil War—but thoroughly localized in its psychology. Only the author's native State, and the primitive mountain region of that, could have supplied the two characters of the story, in one of whom rages a conflict between two primal impulses of his nature, beside which the clash of Union and Rebel arms seems a mimic strife.

AFTER THE BATTLE

BY JOSEPH A. ALTSHELER

THE falling dusk quenched the fury of the battle. The cannon glimmered but feebly on the dim horizon like the sputter of a dying fire. The shouts of combatants were unheard, and Dave Joyce concluded that the fighting was over for that day at least. In his soul he was glad of it.

"Pardner," he said to the wounded man, "the battle has passed on an' left us here like a canoe stuck on a sand bank. I think the fightin' is over, but if it ain't we're out of it anyhow, an' I don't know any law why we shouldn't make ourselves as comf'table as things will allow."

"If there's anythin' done," said the wounded man, "you'll have to do it, for I can't walk, an' I can't move, except when there's a bush for me to grab hold of and pull myself along by."

"That's mighty bad," said Joyce, sympathetically. "Where did you say that bullet took you?"

"I got it in my right leg here," the other replied, "an' I think it broke the bone. Leastways the leg ain't any more use to me than if it was dead, though it hurts like tarnation sometimes. I guess it'll be weeks before I walk again."

"Maybe I could do somethin' for you," said Joyce,

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"if there was a little more light. I guess I'll take a look, anyhow. I haven't been two years in the army not to know anythin' about bullet wounds."

He bent down and with his pocket-knife cut away a patch of the faded blue cloth from the wounded man's leg.

"I guess I'd better not fool with that," he said, looking critically at the wound. "The bullet's gone all the way through, but the blood's clotted up so thick over the places that the bleedin' has stopped. You won't die if you don't move too much an' start that wound to bleedin' again."

"That's consolin'," said the wounded man; "but, since I can't move, I don't know what's to become of me but to lay here on the field an' die anyway."

"Don't you fret," said Joyce, cheerfully. "I'll take care of you. You're Fed. an' I'm Confed., but you're hurt an' I ain't, an' if the case was the other way I'd expect you to do as much for me. Besides, I've lost my regiment in the shuffle, and the chances are if I tried to find it again to-night I'd run right into the middle of the Yankee army, and that would mean Camp Chase for your humble servant, which is a bunk he ain't covetin' very bad just now. So I guess it'll be the safe as well as the right thing for me to do to stick by you. Jerusalem! listen to that! Just hear them crickets chirpin', will you!"

There was a blaze of light in the west, followed by a crash which seemed to roll around the horizon and set all the trees of the forest to trembling. When the echoes were lost beyond the hills the silence became

heavy and portentous. The night was hot and sticky, and the powdery vapor that still hung over the field crept into Joyce's throat and made him cough for breath.

"Thunderation!" he said at length, still looking in the direction in which the light had blazed up. "I guess at least a dozen of the big cannon must have been fired at once then. Can't some fellows get enough fightin' in the daytime, without pluggin' away in the night-time too? Now I come of fightin' stock myself—I'm from Kentucky—but twelve hours out of the twenty-four always 'peared to me to be enough for that sort of thing. Besides, it's so infernal hot to-night, too."

"It was hotter than this for me a while ago," said the wounded man.

"So it was, so it was," said Joyce, apologetically, "an' I mustn't forget you, either. Let 'em fight over there if they want to, an' if they're big enough fools to spile a night that way when they might be restin'. What you need just now is water. I think there's a spring runnin' out of the side of that hill there. If you'll listen you'll hear it tricklin' away, so cool and refreshin' like. I guess it was tricklin' that same way, just as calm an' peaceful as Sunday mornin', while the battle was goin' on round here. Don't you feel as if a little water would help you mightily, pardner?"

"'Twould so," said the wounded man. "I'm burnin' up inside, an' if you'd get me a big drink of it I'd think you were mighty nigh good enough to be one of the twelve apostles."

"It's easy enough for me to do it," said Joyce. "I'll be back in a minute."

He took off his big slouch hat and walked toward the source of the trickling sound. From beneath an overhanging rock in the side of the hill near by a tiny stream of water flowed. After a fall of five feet it plunged into a little basin which it had hollowed out for itself in the rock, and formed a deep and cool little pool. Around the edge of the pool the tender green grass grew. The overflow from it wandered away in a little rill through the woods.

"Thunder, but ain't this purty?" exclaimed Joyce, forgetting that the wounded man was out of hearing. "It's just like our springhouse back in old Kentuck. I've put our butter-crocks an' milk-buckets a hundred times to cool in our pool when I was a boy. Wish I had some of them things now!"

The stirring of peaceful memories caused Joyce to linger a little, in forgetfulness of the wounded man. It was cool in the shadow of the hill, and the gay little stream tinkled merrily in his ears. He would have liked to remain there, but he pulled himself together with an impatient jerk, filled the crown of his hat with the limpid water, and started back to the relief of the wounded man.

He followed the channel of the stream for a little way, and as he turned to step across it he noticed the increasing depth of its waters.

"It's dammed up," he muttered. "I wonder what's done that."

Then he started back shuddering and spilled half the

water from his hat, for he had almost stepped on the body of a man that had fallen across the channel of the poor little rivulet, checking the flow of its waters and deepening the stream.

The body lay face downward, and Joyce could not see the wound that had caused death. But as he stooped down he saw again the broad red flash in the west, and heard the heavy crash of the cannon.

"Will them cannon always be hungry?" he muttered. "But I guess I must give this poor little stream which 'ain't done no harm to anybody the right of way again."

He stooped and pulled the body to one side. With a thankful rush and gurgle the waters of the recent pool sped on in their natural channel, and Joyce returned to the fountain-head to fill his hat again.

He found the wounded man waiting with patience.

"I was gone longer than I ought to have been. Did you think I had left you, pardner?" asked Joyce.

"No," said the man. "I didn't believe you'd play that kind of a trick on me."

"An' so I haven't," said Joyce, "an' for your faith in me I've brought you a hatful of the nicest an' freshest an' coolest water you ever put your lips to in all your born days. Raise your head up, there, an' drink."

The wounded man drank and drank, and then when the hat was emptied he laid his head back in the grass and sighed as if he were in heaven.

"I must say that you 'pear to like water, pardner," said Joyce.

"Like it?" said the wounded man. "Wait till you've been wounded, an' then you'll know what it is to want water. Why, till you brought it I felt as if my inside was full of hot coals an' I'd burn all up if I didn't get something mighty quick to put the fire out."

"Then I reckon I've stopped a whole conflagration," said Joyce, "an' with mighty little trouble to myself, too. But I don't wonder that you get thirsty on a night like this. Thunderation, but ain't it clammy!"

He sat down on a fallen tree and drew his coat-sleeve across his brow. Then he held up the sleeve: it was wet with sweat. There was no wind. The night had brought no coolness. The thick and heavy atmosphere hung close to the earth and coiled around and embraced everything. Through it came the faint gunpowdery vapor that crept into the throats and nostrils of the two men.

"I wish I was at home sleepin' on the hall floor," said Joyce. "I'll bet it would be cool there."

The wounded man made no answer, but turned his face up to the sky and drew in great mouthfuls of the warm air.

"Them tarnation fools over yonder 'pear to have their dander up yet," said Joyce, pointing to the west, where the alternate flashing and rumbling showed that the battle still lingered. "I thought the battle was over long ago, but I guess it ain't. I've knowed some all-fired fools in my time, but the fellows that would keep on fightin' on a hot night like this must be the all-firedest."

Then the two lay quite still for a while, watching

the uneasy rising and falling of the night battle. Had they not known so much of war, they might have persuaded themselves that the flashes they saw were flashes of heat-lightning and the rumbling but the rumbling of summer thunder. But they knew better. They knew it was men and not the elements that fought.

"It's mighty curious," said Joyce, "how the sand's all gone out of me for the time. To-day I felt as if I could whip the whole Yankee army all by myself. To-night I don't want to fight anythin'. I'm as peaceful in temper as a little lamb friskin' about in our old field at home. I hope that there fightin' won't come our way; at least not to-night. How are you feelin', pardner?"

"Pretty well for a wounded man," replied the other; "but I'd like to have some more water."

"Then I'm the man to get it for you," said Joyce, springing up. "An' I'm goin' to see if I can't get somethin' to eat, too, for my innards are cryin' cupboard mighty loud. There's dead men layin' aroun' here, an' there may be somethin' in their haversacks. I hate to rob the dead, but if they've got grub we need it more'n they do."

He returned with another hatful of water, which the wounded man drank eagerly, gratefully. Then he went back and searched in the grass and bushes for the fallen. Presently he came in great glee, and triumphantly held up two haversacks.

"Luck, pardner!" he exclaimed. "Great luck! Bully luck! One of these I got off a dead Fed. and

t'other off a dead Confed., and both must have been boss foragers, for in one haversack there's a roast chicken an' in t'other there's half a b'iled ham, an' in both there's plenty of bread. I haven't had such luck before in six months. You're a Yank, pardner, and a Northerner, an' maybe you don't know much about the vanities of roast chicken an' cold b'iled ham. But it's time you did know. I've come from the field at home when I'd been plowin' all day, an' my appetite was as sharp as a razor an' as big as our barn. I'd put up old Pete, our black mule that I'd been plowin' with, an' feed him; then I'd go to the house an' kinder loosen my waist-ban', an' mother would say to me, 'Come in the kitchen, Dave; your supper's ready for you.' Say, pardner, you ought to see me then. There'd be a pitcher of cold buttermilk from the spring-house, and one dish of roast chicken, an' another of cold ham, an' all for me, too. An' say, pardner, I can taste that ham now. When you eat one piece you want another, an' then another, an' you keep on till there ain't any left on the dish, an' then you lean back in your chair an' wish that when you come to die you'd feel as happy as you do then. Pardner, I wish them times was back again."

"I wish so too," said the wounded man.

"We can't have 'em back, at least not now," said Joyce, cheerily, "but we can make believe, an' it'll be mighty good make-believe, too, for we've got the ham an' the chicken, an' we can get cold water to take the place of cold milk. I guess you can use your arms all right; so you can spread this ham an' chicken out

on the grass, an' I'll see if I can't find a canteen to keep the water in. Say, pardner, we'll have a banquet, you an' me, that's what we'll have."

The stalwart young fellow, full of boyish delight at the idea that the thought of home had suggested to him, swung off in search of the canteen. He found not one alone, but two. Then he returned clanking them together to indicate his success. As he came up he called out, in his hearty voice:

"Pardner, is the supper-table ready? Have you got the knives an' forks? You needn't min' about the napkins. I guess we can get along without 'em just this once."

"All ready," said the wounded man; "an' I guess I can keep you company at this ham an' chicken an' bread, for I'm gettin' a mighty sharp edge on my appetite too."

"So much the better," said Joyce. "There's plenty for both, an' it wouldn't be good manners for me to eat by myself."

He sat down on the grass in front of the improvised repast, and placed one canteen beside the wounded man and the other beside himself.

"Now, pardner," he said, "we'll drink to each other's health, an' then we'll charge the ham an' chicken with more vim than either of us ever charged a breastwork."

They drank from the canteens; and then they made onslaught upon the provisions. Joyce ate for a while in deep and silent content, forgetting the heat and the battle which still lowered in the west. But presently,

when his appetite was dulled, he remembered the cannonade.

"There they go again!" he said. "Boom! Boom! Boom! Won't them fellows ever get enough? I thought I was hungry, but the cannon over there 'pear to be hungrier. I suppose there ain't men enough in all this country to stop up their iron throats. But bang away! They don't bother us, do they, pardner? They can't spile this supper, for all their boomin' an' flashin'."

The wounded man bowed assent and took another piece of the ham.

Joyce leaned back on the grass, held up a chicken leg in his hand, and looked contemplatively at it.

"Ain't it funny, pardner," he said, "that you, a Tommy Yank, an' me, a Johnny Reb, are sittin' here, eatin' grub together, as friendly as two brothers, when we ought to be killin' each other? I don't know what Jeff Davis an' old Abe Lincoln will say about it when they hear of the way you an' me are doin'."

The wounded man laughed.

"You can say that I was your prisoner," he said, "when they summon you before the court-martial. An' so I am, if you choose to make me. I can't resist."

"I'm thinkin' more about gettin' back safe to our army than makin' prisoners," said Joyce, as he flung the chicken bone, now bare, into the bushes.

"That may be hard to do," said the wounded man; "for neither you nor me can tell which way the armies will go. Listen to that boomin'! Wasn't it louder

than before? That fightin' must be movin' round nearer to us."

"Let it move," said Joyce. "I tell you I've had enough of fightin' for one day. That battle can take care of itself. I won't let it bother me. I don't want to shoot anybody."

"Is that the way you feel when you go into battle?" asked the wounded man.

"I can't say exactly," replied Joyce. "Of course when I go out in a charge with my regiment I want to beat the other fellows, but I don't hate 'em, no, not a bit. I've got nothin' against the Yanks. I've knowed some of 'em that was mighty good fellows. There ain't any of 'em that I want to kill. No, I'll take that back; there is one, just one, a bloody villain that I'd like to draw a bead on an' send a bullet through his skulkin' body."

"Who is that?" asked the wounded man; "an' why do you make an exception of him?"

Joyce remained silent for a moment or two and drew a long blade of grass restlessly through his fingers.

"It's not a pleasant story," he said at last, "an' it hurts me now to tell it, but I made you ask the question, an' I guess I might as well tell you, 'cause I feel friendly toward you, pardner, bein' as we are together in distress, like two Robinson Crusoes, so to speak."

The wounded man settled himself in the grass like one who is going to listen comfortably to a story.

"It's just a yarn of the Kentuck hills," said Joyce, "an' a bad enough one, too. We're a good sort of

people up there, but we're hot-blooded, an' when we get into trouble, as we sometimes do, kinfolks stan' together. I guess you're from Maine, or York State, or somewhere away up North, an' you can't understand us. But it's just as I say. Sometimes two men up in our hills fight, an' one kills the other. Then the dead man's brothers, an' sons if he's got any old enough, an' cousins, an' so on, take up their guns an' go huntin' for the man that killed him. An' the livin' man's brothers an' sons an' cousins an' so on take up their guns an come out to help him. An' there you've got your feud, an' there's no tellin' how many years it'll run on, an' how many people will get killed in it. —Thunderation, but wasn't them cannon loud that time! The battle is movin' round toward us sure!"

Joyce listened a moment, but heard nothing more except the echoes.

"Our family got into one of them feuds," he said. "It was the Joyces and the Ryders. I'm Dave Joyce, the son of Henry Joyce. I don't remember how the feud started; about nothin' much, I guess; but it was a red-hot one, I can tell you, pardner. It was fought fair for a long time, but at last Bill Ryder shot father from ambush and killed him. Father hadn't had much to do with the feud, either; he didn't like that sort of thing—didn't think it was right. I said right then that if I ever found the chance when I got big enough I'd kill Bill Ryder."

"Did you get the chance?" asked the wounded man.

"No," replied Joyce. "Country got too hot for

Ryder, and he went away. He came back after a while, an' I was big enough to go gunnin' for him then, but the war broke out, an' off he went into the Union army before I could get a chance to draw a bead on him. I ain't heard of him since. Maybe he's been killed in battle an' his bones are bleachin' somewhere in the woods."

"Most likely," said the wounded man.

"There's no tellin'," said Joyce. "Still, some day when we're comin' up against the Yanks face to face I may see him before me, an' then I'll hold my gun steady an' shoot straight at him, instead of whoopin' like mad an' firin' lickety-split into the crowd, aimin' at nothin,' as I generally do."

"It's a sad story, very sad for you," said the wounded man.

"Yes," said Joyce. "You don't have such things as feuds up North, do you?"

"No," replied the other, "an' we're well off without 'em. Hark, there's the cannon again!"

"Yes, an' they keep creepin' round toward us with their infernal racket," said Joyce. "Cannon love to chaw up people an' then brag about it. But if them fellows are bent on fightin' all night I guess we'll have to give 'em room for it. What do you say to movin'? I've eat all I want, an' I guess you have too, an' we can take what's left with us."

"I don't know," said the wounded man. "My leg's painin' me a good deal, an' the grass is soft an' long here where I'm layin'. It makes a good bed, an' maybe I'd better stay where I am."

"I think not," said Joyce, decidedly. "That night fight's still swingin' down on us, an' if we stay too long them cannon'll feed on us too. We'd better move, pardner. Let me take a look at your wound. It's gettin' lighter, an' I can see better now. The moon's up, an' she's shinin' for all she's worth through them trees. Besides, them cannon-flashes help. Raise up your head, pardner, an' we'll take a look at your wound together."

"I don't think you can do any good," said the wounded man. "It would be better not to disturb it."

"But we must be movin', pardner," said Joyce, a little impatiently. "See, the fight's warmin' up, an' it's still creepin' down on us. Seems to me I can almost hear the tramp of the men an' the rollin' of the cannon-wheels. Jerusalem! what a blaze that was! I say, it's time for us to be goin'. If we stay here we're likely to be ground to death under the cannon-wheels, if we ain't shot first. Just let me get a grip under your shoulders, pardner, an' I'll take you out of this."

The cannon flamed up again, and the deep thunder filled all the night.

"Listen how them old iron throats are growlin' an' mutterin'," said Joyce; "an' they're sayin' it's time for us to be travelin'."

"I believe," said the wounded man, "that I would rather stay where I am an' take my chances. If I move I'm afraid I'll break open my wound. Besides, I think you're mistaken. It seems to me that the fight's passin' round to the right of us."

"Passin' to the right of us nothin'," said Joyce. "It's coming straight this way, with no more respect for our feelin's than if you an' me was a couple of field-mice."

The wounded man made no answer.

"Do you think, pardner," asked Joyce, slight offence showing in his voice, "that the Yanks may come this way an' pick you up an' then you won't be a prisoner? Is that your game?"

As his companion made no answer, Joyce continued:

"You don't think, pardner, that I want to hold you a prisoner, do you? an' you a wounded man, too, that I picked up on the battle-field and that I've eat and drank with? Why, that ain't my style."

He waited for an answer, and as none came he was seized with a sudden alarm.

"You ain't dead, pardner?" he cried. "Jerusalem! what if he's died while I've been standin' here talkin' an' wastin' time!"

He bent over to take a look at the other's face, but the wounded man, with a sudden and convulsive movement, writhed away from him and struck at him with his open hand.

"Keep away!" he cried. "Don't touch me! Don't come near me! I won't have it! I won't have it!"

"Thunderation, pardner!" exclaimed Joyce; "what do you mean? I ain't goin' to harm you. I want to help you." Then he added, pityingly, "I guess he's got the fever an' gone out of his head. So I'll take him along whether he wants to go or not."

He bent over again, seized the wounded man by the shoulders, and forcibly raised him up. At the same moment the cannonade burst out afresh and with increased violence. A blaze of light played over the face of the wounded man, revealing and magnifying every feature, every line.

Joyce uttered no exclamation, but he dropped the man as if he had been a coiling serpent in his hands, and looked at him, an expression of hate and loathing creeping over his face.

"So," he said, at last, "this is the way I have found you?"

The wounded man lay as he had fallen, with his face to the earth.

"No wonder," said Joyce, "you wanted to keep your face hid in the grass! No wonder you hide it there now!"

"Oh, Dave! Dave!" exclaimed the man, springing to his knees with sudden energy, "don't kill me! Don't kill me, Dave!"

"Why shouldn't I kill you?" asked Joyce, scornfully. "What reason can you give why I shouldn't do it?"

"There ain't any. There ain't any. Oh, I know there ain't any," cried the wounded man. "But don't do it, Dave! For Christ's sake don't do it!"

"You murderer! You sneakin', ambushin' murderer!" said Joyce. "It's right for you to beg for your life an' then not get it! Hear them cannon! Hear how they growl, an' see the flash from their throats! They'd like to feed on you, but they won't.

That sort of death is too good for the likes of you. The death for you is to be shot like a ravin' cur."

He drew the loaded pistol from his belt and cocked it with deliberate motion.

"Dave! Dave!" the man cried, dragging himself to Joyce's feet, "you won't do that! You can't! It would be murder, Dave, to shoot me here, me a wounded man that can't help myself!"

"You done it, an' worse," said Joyce. "Of all the men unburnt in hell I think the one who deserves to be there most is the man who hid in ambush and shot another in the back that had never harmed him."

"I know it, Dave, I know it!" cried the wounded man, grasping Joyce's feet with both hands. "It was an awful thing to do, an' I've been sorry a thousand times that I done it, but all the sorrow in the world an' everythin' else that's in the world can't undo it now."

"That's so," said Joyce, "but it don't make any reason why the murderer ought to be kept on livin'."

"It don't, Dave; you're right, I know; but I don't want to die!" cried the man. "I'm a coward, Dave, and I don't want to die by myself here in the woods an' in the dark!"

"You'll soon have light enough," said Joyce, "an' I won't shoot you."

He let down the hammer of his pistol and replaced the weapon in his belt.

"Oh, Dave! Dave!" exclaimed the man, kissing Joyce's foot, "I'm so glad you'll let me have my life. I know I ain't fit to live, but I want to live anyhow."

"I said I wouldn't shoot you," said Joyce, "but I never said I'd spare your life. See that blaze in the trees up there."

A few hundred yards away the forest had burst into flame. Sparks fell upon a tree and blazed up. Long red spirals coiled themselves around the trunk and boughs until the tree became a mass of fire, and then other tongues of flame leaped forward and seized other trees. There was a steady crackling and roaring, and the wind that had sprung up drove smoke and ashes and fiery particles before it.

"That," said Joyce, "is the wood on fire. Them cannon that's been makin' so much fuss done it. I've seen it often in battle when the cannon have been growlin'. The fire grows an' it grows, an' it burns up everythin' in its way. The army is still busy fightin', an' the wounded, them that's hurt too bad to help theirselves, have to lay there on the ground an' watch the fire comin', an' sure to get 'em. By an' by it sweeps down on 'em, an' they shriek an' shriek, but that don't do no good, for before long the fire goes on, an' there they are, dead an' burnt to a coal. I tell you it's an awful death!"

The wounded man was silent now. He had drawn himself up a little, and was watching the fire as it leaped from tree to tree and devoured them one after another.

"That fire is comin' for us, an' the wind is bringin' it along fast," said Joyce, composedly, "but it's easy enough for me to get out of its way. All I've got to do is to go up the hill, an' the clearin's run for a long

way beyond. I can stay up there an 'watch the fire pass, an' you'll be down here right in its track."

"Dave!" cried the man, "you ain't goin' to let me burn to death right before your eyes?"

"That's what I mean to do," said Joyce. "I don't like to shoot a wounded man that can't help himself, an' I won't do it, but I ain't got no call to save you from another death."

"I'd rather be shot than burned to death," cried the man, in a frenzy.

"It's just the death for you," said Joyce.

Then the wounded man again dragged himself to the feet of Joyce.

"Don't do it, Dave!" he cried. "Don't leave me here to burn to death! Oh, I tell you, Dave, I ain't fit to die!"

"Take your hands off my feet," said Joyce. "I don't want 'em to touch me. There's too much blood on 'em."

"Don't leave me to the fire!" continued the man. "You've been kind to me to-night. Help me a little more, Dave, an' you'll be glad you done it when you come to die yourself!"

"I must be goin'," said Joyce, repulsing the man's detaining hands. "It's gettin' hot here now, an' that fire will soon be near enough to scorch my face. Good-by."

"For the sake of your own soul, Dave Joyce," cried the man, beating the ground with his hands, "don't leave me to be burned to a coal! Think, Dave, how we eat an' drank together to-night, like two brothers,

an' how you waited on me an' brought the water an' the grub. You'll remember them things, Dave, when you come to die yourself!"

The fire increased in strength and violence. The flames ran up the trees, and whirled far above them in red coils that met and twined with each other, and then whirled triumphantly on in search of fresh fuel. A giant oak, burned through at the base and swept of all its young boughs and foliage, fell with a rending crash, a charred and shattered trunk. The flames roared, and the burning trees maintained an incessant crackling like a fire of musketry. The smoke through which the sparks of fire were sown in millions grew stifling.

"God, what a sight!" cried Joyce.

"Dave, you won't leave me to that?" cried Ryder.

Joyce drew down his hat over his eyes to shield them from the smoke. Then he stooped, lifted the wounded man upon his powerful shoulders, and went on over the hill.

ROSEMARY FOR REMEMBRANCE

BY HENRY HARLAND

Henry Harland (born in St. Petersburg, Russia, in March, 1861) has achieved two distinct names for himself in literature. His earlier stories, treating almost exclusively of Hebrew life, were written under the pseudonym of "Sidney Luska," and his later fiction, general in its scope, under his proper name. The styles of the two periods differ as widely as their subject-matter. The "Luska" stories are studies in pure, though refined, realism; the "Harland" ones present an almost fantastic finesse of romance. An example of the latter order is here presented.

ROSEMARY FOR REMEMBRANCE

BY HENRY HARLAND

I

I WONDER why I dreamed last night of Zabetta. It is years since she made her brief little transit through my life, and passed out of it utterly. It is years since the very recollection of her—which for years, like an accusing spirit, had haunted me too often—like a spirit was laid. It is long enough, in all conscience, since I have even thought of her, casually, for an instant. And then, last night, after a perfectly usual London day and evening, I went to bed and dreamed of her vividly. What had happened to bring her to my mind? Or is it simply that the god of dreams is a capricious god?

The influence of my dream, at any rate—the bitter-sweet savor of it—has pursued me through my waking hours. All day long to-day Zabetta has been my phantom guest. She has walked with me in the streets; she has waited at my elbow while I wrote or talked or read. Now, at tea-time, she is present with me by my study fireside, in the twilight. Her voice sounds faintly, plaintively, in my ears; her eyes gaze at me sadly from a pale, reproachful face. . . . She bids me to the theatre of memory, where my youth is rehearsed before me in mimic show. There was one—no, there were two little scenes in which Zabetta played the part of leading lady.

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II

I do not care to specify the year in which it happened; it happened a terrible number of years ago; it happened when I was twenty. I had passed the winter in Naples—oh, it had been a golden winter!—and now April had come, and my last Neapolitan day. To-morrow I was to take ship for Marseilles, on the way to join my mother in Paris.

It was in the afternoon; and I was climbing one of those crooked staircase alleys that scale the hillsides behind the town, the salita—is there, in Naples, a Salita Santa Margherita? I had lunched (for the last time!) at the Café d'Europe, and had then set forth upon a last haphazard ramble through the streets. It was tremulous spring weather, with blue skies, soft breezes, and a tender sun; the sort of weather that kindles perilous ardors even in the blood of middle age, and turns the blood of youth to wildfire.

Women sat combing their hair, and singing, and gossiping, before the doorways of their pink and yellow houses; children sprawled, and laughed, and quarreled in the dirt. Pifferari, in sheepskins and sandals, followed by prowling, gaunt-limbed dogs, droned monotonous nasal melodies from their bagpipes. Priests picked their way gingerly over the muddy cobblestones, sleek, black-a-vised priests, with exaggerated hats, like Don Basilio's in the "Barbière." Now and then one passed a fat brown monk; or a soldier; or a white-robed penitent, whose eyes glimmered uncannily from the peep-holes of the hood that hid his face; or

a comely contadina, in her smart costume, with a pomegranate blossom flaming behind her ear, and red lips that curved defiantly as she met the covetous glances wildfire-and-twenty no doubt bestowed upon her—whereat, perhaps, wildfire-and-twenty halted and hesitated for an instant, debating whether to accept the challenge and turn and follow her. A flock of milk-purveying goats jangled their bells a few yards below me. Hawkers screamed their merchandise, fish, and vegetables, and early fruit—apricots, figs, green almonds. Brown-skinned, bare-legged boys shouted at long-suffering donkeys, and whacked their flanks with sticks. And everybody, more or less, importuned you for coppers. *"Mossou, mossou! Un piccolo soldo, per l'amor di Dio!"* The air was vibrant with southern human noises and dense with southern human smells —among which, here and there, wandered strangely a lost waft of perfume from some neighboring garden, a scent of jasmine or of orange flowers.

And then, suddenly, the salita took a turn, and broadened into a small piazza. At one hand there was a sheer terrace, dropping to tiled roofs twenty feet below; and hence one got a splendid view, over the town, of the blue bay, with its shipping, and of Capri, all rose and purple in the distance, and of Vesuvius with its silver wreath of smoke. At the other hand loomed a vast, discolored, pink-stuccoed palace, with grated windows, and a porte-cochère black as the mouth of a cavern; and the upper stories of the palace were in ruins, and out of one corner of their crumbling walls a palm-tree grew. The third side of the

piazza was inevitably occupied by a church, a little pearl-gray rococo edifice, with a bell, no deeper toned than a common dinner-bell, which was now frantically ringing. About the doors of the church countless written notices were pasted, advertising indulgences; beggars clung to the steps, like monster snails; and the greasy leathern portière was constantly being drawn aside to let some one enter or come out.

III

It was here that I met Zabetta.

The heavy portière swung open, and a young girl stepped from the darkness behind it into the sunshine.

I saw a soft face, with brown eyes; a plain black frock, with a little green nosegay stuck in its belt; and a small round scarlet hat.

A hideous old beggar woman stretched a claw toward this apparition, mumbling something. The apparition smiled, and sought in its pocket, and made the beggar woman the richer by a soldo.

I was twenty, and the April wind was magical. I thought I had never seen so beautiful a smile, a smile so radiant, so tender.

I watched the young girl as she tripped down the church steps, and crossed the piazza, coming toward me. Her smile lingered, fading slowly, slowly, from her face.

As she neared me, her eyes met mine. For a second we looked straight into each other's eyes. . . .

Oh, there was nothing bold, nothing sophisticated or immodest, in the momentary gaze she gave me. It

was a natural, spontaneous gaze of perfectly frank, of perfectly innocent and impulsive interest, in exchange for mine of open admiration. But it touched the wild-fire in my veins, and made it leap tumultuously.

IV

Happiness often passes close to us without our suspecting it, the proverb says.

The young girl moved on; and I stood still, feeling dimly that something precious had passed close to me. I had not turned back to follow any of the brazenly provocative contadine. But now I could not help it. Something precious had passed within arm's reach of me. I must not let it go, without at least a semblance of pursuing it. If I waited there passive till she was out of sight, my regrets would be imbittered by the recollection that I had not even tried.

I followed her eagerly, but vaguely, in a tremor of unformulated hopes and fears. I had no definite intentions, no designs. Presently, doubtless, she would come to her journey's end—she would disappear in a house or shop—and I should have my labor for my pains. Nevertheless, I followed. What would you? She was young, she was pretty, she was neatly dressed. She had big bright brown eyes, and a slender waist, and a little round scarlet hat set jauntily upon a mass of waving soft brown hair. And she walked gracefully, with delicious undulations, as if to music, lifting her skirts up from the pavement, and so disclosing the daintiest of feet, in trim buttoned boots of glazed leather, with high Italian heels. And her

smile was lovely—and I was twenty—and it was April. I must not let her escape me, without at least a semblance of pursuit.

She led me down the salita that I had just ascended. She could scarcely know that she was being followed, for she had not once glanced behind her.

V

At first I followed meekly, unperceived, and contented to remain so.

But little by little a desire for more aggressive measures grew within me. I said, "Why not—instead of following meekly—why not overtake and outdistance her, then turn round, and come face to face with her again? And if again her eyes should meet mine as frankly as they met them in the piazza. . . ."

The mere imagination of their doing so made my heart stop beating.

I quickened my pace. I drew nearer and nearer to her. I came abreast of her—oh, how the wildfire trembled! I pressed on for a bit, and then, true to my resolution, turned back.

Her eyes did meet mine again quite frankly. What was more, they brightened with a little light of surprise, I might almost have fancied a little light of pleasure.

If the mere imagination of the thing had made my heart stop beating, the thing itself set it to pounding, racing, uncontrollably, so that I felt all but suffocated and had to catch my breath.

She knew now that the young man she had passed

in the piazza had followed her of set purpose; and she was surprised, but, seemingly, not displeased. They were wonderfully gentle, wonderfully winning eyes, those eyes she raised so frankly to my desirous ones; and innocent, innocent, with all the unsuspecting innocence of childhood. In years she might be seventeen, older perhaps; but there was a child's fearless unconsciousness of evil in her wide brown eyes. She had not yet been taught (or, anyhow, she clearly didn't believe) that it was dangerous and unbecoming to exchange glances with a stranger in the streets.

She was as good as smiling on me. Might I dare the utmost? Might I venture to speak to her? . . . My heart was throbbing too violently. I could not have found an articulate human word, nor a shred of voice, nor a pennyweight of self-assurance, in my body.

So, thrilling with excitement, quailing in panic, I passed her again.

I passed her, and kept on up the narrow alley for half a dozen steps, when again I turned.

She was standing where I had left her, looking after me. There was the expression of unabashed disappointment in her dark eyes now, which, in a minute, melted to an expression of appeal.

"Oh, aren't you going to speak to me, after all?" they pleaded.

Wooed by those soft monitors, I plucked up a sort of desperate courage. Hot coals burned in my cheeks, something fluttered terribly in my breast; I was literally quaking in every limb. My spirit was exultant, but my flesh was faint. Her eyes drew me, drew me.

. . . I fancy myself awkwardly raising my hat; I hear myself accomplish a half-smothered salutation.

"Buon' giorno, Signorina."

Her face lighted up with that celestial smile of hers, and in a voice that was like ivory and white velvet, she returned, *"Buon' giorno, Signorino."*

VI

And then I don't know how long we stood together in silence.

This would never do, I recognized. I must not stand before her in silence, like a guilty schoolboy. I must feign composure. I must carry off the situation lightly like a man of the world, a man of experience. I groped anxiously in the confusion of my wits for something that might pass for an apposite remark.

At last I had a flash of inspiration. "What—what fine weather," I gasped. *"Che bel tempo!"*

"Oh, molto bello," she responded. It was like a cadenza on a flute.

"You—you are going into the town?" I questioned.

"Yes," said she.

"May I—may I have the pleasure—" I faltered.

"But yes," she consented, with an inflection that wondered. "What else have you spoken to me for?"

And we set off down the salita, side by side.

VII

She had exquisite little white ears, with little coral earrings, like drops of blood; and a perfect rosebud mouth, a mouth that matched her eyes for innocence

and sweetness. Her scarlet hat burned in the sun, and her brown hair shook gently under it. She had plump little soft white hands.

Presently, when I had begun to feel more at my ease, I hazarded a question. "You are a republican, Signorina?"

"No," she assured me, with a puzzled elevation of the brows.

"Ah, well, then you are a cardinal," I concluded.

She gave a silvery trill of laughter, and asked, "Why must I be either a republican or a cardinal?"

"You wear a scarlet hat—a *bonnet rouge,*" I explained.

At which she laughed again, crisply, merrily.

"You are French," she said.

"Oh, am I?"

"Aren't you?"

"As you wish, Signorina; but I had never thought so."

And still again she laughed.

"You have come from church," said I.

"Già," she assented; "from confession."

"Really? And did you have a great many wickednesses to confess?"

"Oh, yes; many, many," she answered, simply.

"And now have you got a heavy penance to perform?"

"No; only twenty *aves.* And I must turn my tongue seven times in my mouth before I speak, whenever I am angry."

"Ah, then you are given to being angry? You have a bad temper?"

"Oh, dreadful, dreadful," she cried, nodding her head.

It was my turn to laugh now. "Then I must be careful not to vex you."

"Yes. But I will turn my tongue seven times before I speak, if you do," she promised.

"Are you going far?" I asked.

"I am going nowhere. I am taking a walk."

"Shall we go to the Villa Nazionale, and watch the driving?"

"Or to the Toledo, and look at the shop windows?"

"We can do both. We will begin at the Toledo, and end in the Villa."

"Bene," she acquiesced.

After a little silence, "I am so glad I met you," I informed her, looking into her eyes.

Her eyes softened adorably. "I am so glad too," she said.

"You are lovely, you are sweet," I vowed, with enthusiasm.

"Oh, no!" she protested. "I am as God made me."

"You are lovely, you are sweet. I thought—when I first saw you, above there, in the piazza—when you came out of church, and gave the soldo to the old beggar woman—I thought you had the loveliest smile I had ever seen."

A beautiful blush suffused her face, and her eyes swam in a mist of pleasure. *"E vero?"* she questioned.

"Oh, vero, vero. That is why I followed you. You don't mind my having followed you?"

"Oh, no; I am glad."

After another interval of silence, "You are not Neapolitan?" I said. "You don't speak like a Neapolitan."

"No; I am Florentine. We live in Naples for my father's health. He is not strong. He can not endure the cold winters of the north."

I murmured something sympathetic; and she went on, "My father is a violinist. To-day he has gone to Capri, to play at a festival. He will not be back until to-morrow. So I was very lonesome."

"You have no mother?"

"My mother is dead," she said, crossing herself. In a moment she added, with a touch of pride, "During the season my father plays in the orchestra of the San Carlo."

"I am sure I know what your name is," said I.

"Oh? How can you know? What is it?"

"I think your name is Rosabella."

"Ah, then you are wrong. My name is Elisabetta. But in Naples everybody says Zabetta. And yours?"

"Guess."

"Oh, I can not guess. Not—not Federico?"

"Do I look as if my name were Federico?"

She surveyed me gravely for a minute, then shook her head pensively. "No; I do not think your name is Federico."

And therewith I told her my name, and made her repeat it till she could pronounce it without a struggle. It sounded very pretty, coming from her pretty lips, quite southern and romantic, with its r's tremendously enriched.

"Anyhow, I know your age," said I.

"What is it?"

"You are seventeen."

"No—ever so much older."

"Eighteen then."

"I shall be nineteen in July."

VIII

Before the brilliant shop windows of the Toledo we dallied for an hour or more, Zabetta's eyes sparkling with delight as they rested on the bright-hued silks, the tortoise-shell and coral, the gold and silver filagree work, that were there displayed. But when she admired some one particular object above another, and I besought her to let me buy it for her, she refused austerely. "But no, no, no! It is impossible." Then we went on to the Villa, and strolled by the sea-wall, between the blue-green water and the multi-colored procession of people in carriages. And by and by Zabetta confessed that she was tired, and proposed that we should sit down on one of the benches. "A café would be better fun," submitted her companion. And we placed ourselves at one of the out-of-door tables of the café in the garden, where, after some urging, I prevailed upon Zabetta to drink a cup of chocolate. Meanwhile, with the ready confidence of youth, we had each been desultorily autobiographical; and if our actual acquaintance was only the affair of an afternoon, I doubt if in a year we could have felt that we knew each other better.

"I must go home," Zabetta said at last.

"Oh, not yet, not yet," cried I.

"It will be dinner-time. I must go home to dinner."

"But your father is at Capri. You will have to dine alone."

"Yes."

"Then don't. Come with me instead, and dine at a restaurant."

Her eyes glowed wistfully for an instant; but she replied, "Oh, no; I can not."

"Yes, you can. Come."

"Oh, no; impossible."

"Why?"

"Oh, because."

"Because what?"

"There is my cat. She will have nothing to eat."

"Your cook will give her something."

"My cook!" laughed Zabetta. "My cook is here before you."

"Well, you must be a kind mistress. You must give your cook an evening out."

"But my poor cat?"

"Your cat can catch a mouse."

"There are no mice in our house. She has frightened them all away."

"Then she can wait. A little fast will be good for her soul."

Zabetta laughed, and I said, *"Andiamo!"*

At the restaurant we climbed to the first floor, and they gave us a table near the window, whence we could look out over the villa to the sea beyond. The sun

was sinking, and the sky was gay with rainbow tints, like mother-of-pearl.

Zabetta's face shone joyfully. "This is only the second time in my life that I have dined in a restaurant," she told me. "And the other time was very long ago, when I was quite young. And it wasn't nearly so grand a restaurant as this, either."

"And now what would you like to eat?" I asked, picking up the bill of fare.

"May I look?" said she.

I handed her the document, and she studied it at length. I think, indeed, she read it through. In the end she appeared rather bewildered.

"Oh, there is so much. I don't know. Will you choose, please?"

I made a shift at choosing, and the sympathetic waiter flourished kitchenward with my commands.

"What is that little green nosegay you wear in your belt, Zabetta?" I inquired.

"Oh, this—it is a rosemary. Smell it," she said, breaking off a sprig and offering it to me.

"Rosemary—that's for remembrance," quoted I.

"What does that mean? What language is that?" she asked.

I tried to translate it to her. And then I taught her to say it in English. "Rroseméri—tsat is forr rremembrrance."

"Will you write it down for me?" she requested. "It is pretty."

And I wrote it for her on the back of one of my cards.

IX

After dinner we crossed the garden again, and again stood by the sea-wall. Over us the soft spring night was like a dark sapphire. Points of red, green, and yellow fire burned from the ships in the bay, and seemed of the same company as the stars above them. A rosy aureole in the sky, to the eastward, marked the smouldering crater of Vesuvius. Away in the Chiaja a man was singing comic songs to an accompaniment of mandolins and guitars; comic songs that sounded pathetic, as they reached us in the distance.

I asked Zabetta how she wished to finish the evening.

"I don't care," said she.

"Would you like to go to the play?"

"If you wish."

"What do *you* wish?"

"I think I should like to stay here a little longer. It is pleasant."

We leaned on the parapet, close to each other. Her face was very pale in the starlight; her eyes were infinitely deep, and dark, and tender. One of her little hands lay on the stone wall, like a white flower. I took it. It was warm and soft. She did not attempt to withdraw it. I bent over it and kissed it. I kissed it many times. Then I kissed her lips. "Zabetta—I love you—I love you," I murmured fervently. —Don't imagine that I didn't mean it. It was April, and I was twenty.

"I love you, Zabetta. Dearest little Zabetta! I love you so."

"*E vero?*" she questioned, scarcely above her breath.

"Oh, *si; é vero, vero, vero,*" I asseverated. "And you? And you?"

"Yes, I love you," she whispered.

And then I could say no more. The ecstasy that filled my heart was too poignant. We stood there speechless, hand in hand, and breathed the air of heaven.

By and by Zabetta drew her bunch of rosemary from her belt, and divided it into two parts. One part she gave to me, the other she kept. "Rosemary—it is for constancy," she said. I pressed the cool herb to my face for a moment, inhaling its bitter-sweet fragrance; then I fastened it in my buttonhole. On my watch-chain I wore—what everybody in Naples used to wear—a little coral hand, a little clinched coral hand, holding a little golden dagger. I detached it now, and made Zabetta take it. "Coral—that is also for constancy," I reminded her; "and besides, it protects one from the Evil Eye."

X

At last Zabetta asked me what time it was; and when she learned that it was half-past nine, she insisted that she really must go home. "They shut the outer door of the house we live in at ten o'clock, and I have no key."

"You can ring up the porter."

"Oh, there is no porter."

"But if we had gone to the theatre?"

"I should have had to leave you in the middle of the play."

"Ah, well," I consented; and we left the Villa and took a cab.

"Are you happy, Zabetta?" I asked her, as the cab rattled us toward our parting.

"Oh, so happy, so happy! I have never been so happy before."

"Dearest Zabetta!"

"You will love me always?"

"Always, always."

"We will see each other every day. We will see each other to-morrow?"

"Oh, to-morrow!" I groaned suddenly, the actualities of life rushing all at once upon my mind.

"What is it? What of to-morrow?"

"Oh, to-morrow, to-morrow!"

"What? What?" Her voice was breathless with suspense, with alarm.

"Oh, I had forgotten. You will think I am a beast."

"What is it? For heaven's sake, tell me."

"You will think I am a beast. You will think I have deceived you. To-morrow—I can not help it—I am not my own master—I am summoned by my parents—to-morrow I am going away—I am leaving Naples."

"You are leaving Naples?"

"I am going to Paris."

"To Paris?"

"Yes."

There was a breathing-space of silence. Then,

"Oh, Dio!" sobbed Zabetta; and she began to cry as if her heart would break.

I seized her hands; I drew her to me. I tried to comfort her. But she only cried and cried and cried.

"Zabetta . . . Zabetta. . . . Don't cry. . . . Forgive me. . . . Oh, don't cry like that."

"Oh, Dio! Oh, caro Dio!" she sobbed.

"Zabetta—listen to me," I began. "I have something to say to you. . . ."

"Cosa?" she asked faintly.

"Zabetta—do you really love me?"

"Oh, tanto, tanto!"

"Then listen, Zabbetta. If you really love me—come with me."

"Come with you. How?"

"Come with me to Paris."

"To Paris?"

"Yes, to-morrow."

There was another instant of silence, and then again Zabetta began to cry.

"Will you? Will you? Will you come with me to Paris?" I implored her.

"Oh, I would, I would. But I can't. I can't."

"Why not?"

"Oh, I can't."

"Why? Why can't you?"

"Oh, my father—I can not leave my father."

"Your father? But—if you love me—"

"He is old. He is ill. He has no one but me. I can not leave him."

"Zabetta!"

"No, no. I can not leave him. *Oh, Dio mio!*"

"But Zabetta—"

"No. It would be a sin. Oh, the worst of sins, He is old and ill. I can not leave him. Don't ask me. It would be dreadful."

"But then? Then what? What shall we do?"

"Oh, I don't know. I wish I were dead."

The cab came to a standstill, and Zabetta said, "Here we are." I helped her to descend. We were before a dark porte-cochère, in some dark back street. high up the hillside.

"*Addio,*" said Zabetta, holding out her hand.

"You won't come with me?"

"I can't. I can't. *Addio.*"

"Oh, Zabetta! Do you— Oh, say, say that you forgive me."

"Yes. *Addio.*"

"And, Zabetta, you—you have my address. It is on the card I gave you. If you ever need anything—if you are ever in trouble of any kind—remember you have my address—you will write to me."

"Yes. *Addio.*"

"*Addio.*"

She stood for a second, looking up at me from great brimming eyes, and then she turned away and vanished in the darkness of the porte-cochère. I got into the cab, and was driven to my hotel.

IX

And here, one might have supposed, was an end of the episode; but no.

I went to Paris, I went to New York, I returned to Paris, I came on to London; and in this journeying more than a year was lost. In the beginning I had suffered as much as you could wish me in the way of contrition, in the way of regret too. I blamed myself and pitied myself with almost equal fervor. I had trifled with a gentle human heart; I had been compelled to let a priceless human treasure slip from my possession. But—I was twenty. And there were other girls in the world. And a year is a long time, when we are twenty. Little by little the image of Zabetta faded, faded. By the year's end, I am afraid it had become very pale indeed. . . .

It was late June, and I was in London, when the post brought me a letter. The letter bore an Italian stamp, and had originally been directed to my old address in Paris. Thence (as the numerous redirections on the big square foreign envelope attested) it had been forwarded to New York; thence back again to Paris; and thence finally to London.

The letter was written in the neatest of tiny copperplate; and this is a translation of what it said:

"Dear Friend—My poor father died last month in the German Hospital, after an illness of twenty-one days. Pray for his soul.

"I am now alone and free, and if you still wish it, can come to you. It was impossible for me to come when you asked me; but you have not ceased to be my constant thought. I keep your coral hand.—Your ever faithful Zabetta Collaluce."

Inclosed in the letter there was a sprig of some dried, bitter-sweet smelling herb; and, in pencil, below the signature—laboriously traced, as I could guess, from what I had written for her on my visiting-card—the English phrase: "Rosemary—that's for remembrance."

The letter was dated early in May, which made it six weeks old.

What could I do? What answer could I send?

Of course, you know what I did do. I procrastinated and vacillated, and ended by sending no answer at all. I could not write and say, "Yes, come to me." But how could I write and say, "No, do not come"? Besides, would she not have given up hoping for an answer by this time? It was six weeks since she had written. I tried to think that the worst was over.

But my remorse took a new and a longer and a stronger lease of life. A vision of Zabetta, pale, with anxious eyes, standing at her window, waiting, waiting for a word that never came—for months I could not chase it from my conscience; it was years before it altogether ceased its accusing visits.

XII

And then, last night, after a perfectly usual London day and evening, I went to bed and dreamed of her vividly; and all day long to-day the fragrance of my dream has clung about me—a bitter-sweet fragrance, like that of rosemary itself. Where is Zabetta now? What is her life? How have the years treated her?

. . . In my dream she was still eighteen. In reality —it is melancholy to think how far from eighteen she has had leisure, since that April afternoon, to drift.

Youth faces forward, impatient of the present, panting to anticipate the future. But we who have crossed a certain sad meridian, we turn our gaze backward, and tell the relentless gods what we would sacrifice to recover a little of the past, one of those shining days when to us also it was given to sojourn among the Fortunate Islands. *Ah, si jeunesse savait!* . . .

A RED-HAIRED CUPID

BY HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS

Henry Wallace Phillips (born about 1870, in Staten Island) is one of our few younger writers who have gathered really fresh laurels from that favorite stamping ground of American humorists, the Western plains. His picturesque wit is a development, instead of a reminiscence, of the humor of extravaganza which specially characterizes the elder school of Mark Twain. Romance is no less his métier than humor, as the present story bears witness.

A RED-HAIRED CUPID

BY HENRY WALLACE PHILLIPS

"HOW did I come to get myself disliked down at the Chanta Seechee? Well, I'll tell you," said Reddy, the cowpuncher. "The play came up like this. First they made the Chanta Seechee into a stock company, then the stock company put all their brains in one think, and says they, 'We'll make this man Jones superintendent, and the ranch is all right at once.' So out come Jones from Boston, Massachusetts, and what he didn't know about running a ranch was common talk in the country, but what he thought he knew about running a ranch was too much for one man to carry around. He wasn't a bad-hearted feller in some ways, yet on the whole he felt it was an honor to a looking-glass to have the pleasure of reflecting him. Looking-glass? I should say he had! And a bureau, and a boot-blacking jigger, and a feather bed, and curtains, and truck in his room. Strange fellers used to open their eyes when they saw that room. 'Hellooo!' they'd say, 'whose little birdie have we here?' And other remarks that hurt our feelings considerable. Jonesy, he said the fellers were a rank lot of barbarians. He said it to old Neighbor Case's face, and he and the old man came together like a pair of hens, for Jonesy had

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sand in spite of his faults. That was a fight worth traveling to see. They covered at least an acre of ground; they tore the air with upper swats and cross swipes; they hollered, they jumped and they pitched, and when the difficulty was adjusted we found that Jonesy's coat was painfully ripped up the back and Neighbor Case had lost his false teeth. One crowd of fellers patted Jones on the back and said, 'Never mind your coat, old horse; you've licked a man twice your age,' and the other comforted Neighbor, saying, 'Never mind, Case; you can ease your mind by thinking how you headed up that rooster, and he fifty pounds lighter than you.'

"Jonesy put on airs after that. He felt he was a hard citizen. And then he had the misfortune to speak harshly to Arizona Jenkins when Old Dry Belt was in liquor. Then he got roped and dragged through the slough. He cried like a baby while I helped him scrape the mud off, but not because he was scared! No, sir! That little runt was full of blood and murder.

" 'You mark me, now, Red,' says he, the tears making bad-land watercourses through the mud on his cheeks, 'I shall fire upon that man the first time I see him—will you lend me your revolver?'

" 'Lord, Jones, see here,' says I, 'don't you go making any such billy-goat play as that—keep his wages until he apologizes; put something harmful in his grub; but, as you have respect for the Almighty's handiwork as represented by your person, don't pull a gun on Arizona Jenkins—that's the one thing he won't take from nobody.'

"'D-d-darn him!' snivels Jonesy, 'I ain't afraid o-o-of him'; and the strange fact is that he wasn't. Well, I saw he was in such a taking that he might do something foolish and get hurt, so I goes to Arizona and says I, 'You ought to apologize to Jones.' What Zony replied ain't worth repeating—'and you along with him,' he winds up.

"'Now ain't that childish?' I says. 'A six-footer like you, that can shoot straight with either hand, and yet ain't got generosity enough to ease the feelings of a poor little devil that's fair busting with shame.'

"'Well, what did he want to tell me to shut up my mouth for?' cried Old Dry Belt. 'Men have died of less than that.'

"'Aw, shucks, Zony,' I says, 'a great, big man like you oughtn't to come down on a little cuss who's all thumb-hand-side and left feet.'

"'That be blowed,' says he—only he says it different. 'I'd like to know what business such a sawed-off has to come and tell a full-grown man like me to shut up his mouth? He'd ought to stay in a little man's place and talk sassy to people his own size. When he comes shooting off his bazoo to a man that could swaller him whole without loosening his collar, its impidence; that's what it is.'

"'Well, as a favor to me?' I says.

"'Well, if you put it that way—I don't want to be small about it.'

"So Arizona goes up to Jones and sticks out his hand. 'There's my hand, Jones,' he says. 'I'm mighty sorry you told me to shut up my mouth,' says he.

" 'So am I,' says Jones heartily, not taking in the sense of the words, but feeling that it was all in good intention. So that was all right and I stood in with the management in great shape for fixing up the fuss so pleasant. But it didn't last. They say nothing lasts in this world. There's some pretty solid rocks in the Cœur d'Alêne, however, and I should like to wait around and see if they don't hold out, but I'll never make it. I've been in too much excitement.

"Well, the next thing after Jonesy got established was that his niece must come out during vacation and pay him a visit. 'Jeerusalem!' thinks I, 'Jonesy's niece!' I had visions of a thin, yaller, sour little piece, with mouse-colored hair plastered down on her head, and an unkind word for everybody. Jonesy told me about her being in college, and then I stuck a pair of them nose-grabber specks on the picture. I can stand 'most any kind of a man, but if there's anything that makes the tears come to my eyes it's a botch of a woman. I know they may have good qualities and all that, but I don't like 'em, and that's the whole of it. We gave three loud groans when we got the news in the bull-pen. And I cussed for ten minutes straight, without repeating myself once, when it so fell out that the members of the board rolled out our way the day the girl had to be sent for and Jonesy couldn't break loose, and your Uncle was elected to take the buck-board and drive twenty miles to the railroad. I didn't mind the going out, but that twenty miles back with Jonesy's niece! Say, I foamed like a soda-water bot-

tle when I got into the bull-pen and told the boys my luck.

" 'Well,' says Kyle Lambert, 'that's what you might expect; your sins have found you out.'

" 'No, they ain't; they've caught me at home as usual,' says I. 'Well, I'll give that Eastern blossom an idea of the quality of this country anyhow. So I togs myself up in the awfulest rig I could find; strapped two ca'tridge belts to me, every hole filled, and a gun in every holster; put candle-grease on my mustache and twisted the ends up to my eye-winkers; stuck a knife in my hatband and another in my boot; threw a shotgun and a rifle in the buckboard, and pulled out quick through the colt-pens before Jonesy could get his peeps on to me.

"Well, sir, I was jarred witless when I laid my eyes on that young woman. I'd had my mind made up so thorough as to what she must be that the facts knocked me cold. She was the sweetest, handsomest, healthiest female I ever see. It would make you believe in fairy stories again just to look at her. She was all the things a man ever wanted in this world rolled up in a prize package. Tall, round, and soople, limber and springy in her action as a thoroughbred, and with something modest yet kind of daring in her face that would remind you of a good, honest boy. Red, white, and black were the colors she flew. Hair and eyes black, cheeks and lips red, and the rest of her white. Now, there's a pile of difference in them colors; when you say 'red,' for instance, you ain't cleaned up the subject by a sight. My top-knot's red,

but that wasn't the color of Loys's cheeks. No; that was a color I never saw before nor since. A rose would look like a tomater alongside of 'em. Then, too, I've seen black eyes so hard and shiny you could cut glass with 'em. And again that wasn't her style. The only way you could get a notion of what them eyes were like would be to look at 'em; you'd remember 'em all right if you did. Seems like the good Lord was kind of careless when he built Jonesy, but when he turned that girl out he played square with the fambly.

"I ain't what you might call a man that's easily disturbed in his mind, but I know I says to myself that first day, 'If I was ten year younger, young lady, they'd never lug you back East again.' Gee, man! There was a time when I'd have pulled the country up by the roots but I'd have had that girl! I notice I don't fall in love so violent as the years roll on. I can squint my eye over the cards now and say, 'Yes, that's a beautiful hand, but I reckon I'd better stay out,' and lay 'em down without a sigh; whereas, when I was a young feller, if I had three aces in sight I'd raise the rest of the gathering right out of their foot-leather—or get caught at it. Usually I got caught at it, for a man couldn't run the mint long with the kind of luck I have.

"Well, I was plumb disgusted with the fool way I'd rigged myself up, but, fortunately for me, Darragh, the station-man, came out with the girl. 'There's Reddy, from your ranch now, ma'am,' says he, and when he caught sight of me, 'What's the matter, Red; are the Injuns up?'

"Darragh was a serious Irishman, and that's the mournfullest thing on top of the globe; and besides, he believed anything you'd tell him. There ain't any George Washington strain in my stock, so I proceeded to get out of trouble.

" 'They ain't *up* exactly,' says I, 'but it looked as if they were a leetle on the rise, and being as I had a lady to look out for, I thought I'd play safe.'

"The color kind of went out of the girl's cheeks. Eastern folk are scandalous afraid of Injuns.

" 'Perhaps I'd better not start?' says she.

" 'Don't you be scart, miss, says Darragh, 'You're all right as long as you're with Red—he's the toughest proposition we've got in this part of the country.'

" 'I'm obliged to you, Darragh,' says I. He meant well, but hell's full of them people. I'd have given a month's wages for one lick at him. Nice reputation to give me before that girl! She eyed me mighty doubtful.

"I stepped up to her, with my hat in my hand. 'Miss Andree,' says I (she was Jonesy's sister's child), 'if you come along with me I'll guarantee you a safe journey. If any harm reaches you it will be after one of the liveliest times in the history of the territory.'

"At this she laughed. 'Very well,' says she, 'I'll chance it, Mr. Red.'

" 'His name ain't Red,' puts in Darragh, solemn. 'His name's Saunders. We call him Red becus uf his hair.'

" 'I'm sure I beg your pardon,' says Miss Loys, all of a fluster.

" 'That's all right, ma'm; no damage done at all,' says I. 'It's useless for me to try to conceal the fact that my hair is a little on the auburn. You mustn't mind what Darragh says. We've had a good deal of hot weather lately and his brains have gone wrong. Now hop in and we'll touch the breeze.' So I piled her trunk in and away we flew.

"Bud and Dandy were a corking little team. They'd run the whole distance from the railway to the ranch if you'd let 'em—and I never interfered. A straight line and the keen jump hits me all right when I'm going some place, although I can loaf with the next man on occasion. So we missed most of the gullies.

"The ponies were snorting and pulling grass, the buckboard bouncing behind 'em like a rubber ball, and we were crowding into the teeth of the northwest wind, which made it seem as if we were traveling 100 per cent. better than a Dutch clock would show.

" 'Goodness gracious!' says the girl, 'do you always go like this in this country? And aren't there any roads?'

" 'Why, no,' says I. 'Hike!' and I snapped the blacksnake over the ponies' ears, and they strung themselves out like a brace of coyotes, nearly pulling the buckboard out from under us. 'Sometimes we travel like *this*,' I says. 'And as for roads, I despise 'em. You're not afraid, are you?'

" 'Indeed I'm not. I think it's glorious. Might I drive?'

" 'If I can smoke,' says I, 'then *you* can drive.' I'd heard about young women who'd been brought up so tender that tobacker smoke would ruin their morals or something, and kind of wondered if she was that sort.

" 'That's a bargain,' says she prompt. 'But how you're going to light a cigar in this wind I don't see.'

" 'Cigarette,' says I. 'And if you would kindly hold my hat until I get one rolled I'll take it kind of you.'

" 'But what about the horses?' says she.

" 'Put your foot on the lines and they'll make. That's the main and only art of driving on the prairie —not to let the lines get under the horses' feet—all the rest is just sit still and look at the scenery.'

"She held my hat for a wind-break, and I got my paper pipe together. And then—not a match. I searched every pocket. Not a lucifer. That is more of what I got for being funny and changing my clothes. And then she happened to think of a box she had for traveling, and fished it out of her grip.

" 'Young lady,' I says, 'until it comes to be your bad luck—which I hope won't ever happen—to be very much in love with a man who won't play back, you'll never properly know the pangs of a man that's got all the materials to smoke with except the fire. Now, if I have a chance to do as much for you sometime, I'm there.'

"She laughed and crinkled up her eyes at me. 'All right, Mr. Saunders. When that obdurate man disdains me, I'll call for your help.'

" 'The place for the man that would disdain you is an asylum,' says I. 'And the only help I'd give you would be to put him there.' She blushed real nice. I like to see a woman blush. It's a trick they can't learn!

"But I see she was put out by my easy talk, so I gave her a pat on the back and says, 'Don't mind me, little girl. We fellers see an eighteen-carat woman so seldom that it goes to our heads. There wasn't no offence meant, and you'll be foolish if you put it there. Let's shake hands.'

"So she laughed again and shook. I mean *shook*. It wasn't like handing you so much cold fish—the way some women shake hands. And Loys and me, we were full pards from date.

"I made one more bad break on the home trip.

" 'Jonesy will be powerful glad to see you,' says I.

" 'Jonesy!' says she, surprised. 'Jonesy! Oh, is *that* what you call Uncle Albert?'

" 'Well, it does sometimes happen that way,' says I. And then my anti-George-Washington blood rose again. 'You see, he was kind of lonesome out here at first, and we took to calling him Jonesy to cheer him up and make him feel at home,' I says.

" 'Oh!' says she. And I reckon she didn't feel so horribly awful about it, for after looking straight toward the Gulf of Mexico for a minute, suddenly she bust right out and hollered. It seems that Jones cut a great deal of grass to a swipe when he was back home in his own street. It's astonishing how little of a man it takes to do that in the East. We had an

argument once on the subject. 'It's intellect does it,' says Silver Tompkins. 'Oh, that's it, eh?' says Wind-River Smith. 'Well, I'm glad I'm not troubled that way. I'd rather have a forty-four chest than a number eight head any day you can find in the almanac.' And I'm with Smithy. This knowing so much it makes you sick ain't any better than being so healthy you don't know nothing, besides being square miles less fun. Another thing about the Eastern folks is they're so sot in their views, and it don't matter to them whether the facts bear out their idees or not.

" 'Here, take a cigar,' says one of the Board of Directors to me—a little fat old man, who had to draw in his breath before he could cross his legs—'them cigarettes'll ruin your health,' says he. Mind you, he was always kicking and roaring about his liver, or stummick, or some of his works. I'm a little over six-foot-three in my boots when I stand up straight, and I stood up straight as the Lord would let me and gazed down at that little man. 'Pardner,' says I, 'I was raised on cigarettes. When I was two years old I used to have a pull at the bottle, and then my cigarette to aid digestion. It may be conceit on my part,' I says, 'but I'd rather be a wreck like me than a prize-fighter like you.' They're queer; you'd think that little fat man would have noticed the difference without my pointing it out to him.

"Well, I don't have to mention that Loys stirred things up considerable around the Chanta Seechee and vicinity. Gee! What a diving into wannegans and a fetching out of good clothes there was. And trading

of useful coats and things for useless but decorating silk handkerchers and things. And what a hair cutting and whisker trimming.

"But Kyle was the man from the go in. And it was right it should be so. If ever two young people were born to make trouble for each other it was Kyle and Loys.

"A nice, decent fellow was Kyle. Nothing remarkable, you could say, and that was one of his best points. Howsomever, he had a head that could do plain thinking, a pair of shoulders that discouraged frivoling, and he was as square a piece of furniture as ever came out of a factory. More'n that; he had quite a little education, saved his money, never got more than good-natured loaded, and he could ride anything that had four legs, from a saw-horse to old tiger Buck, who would kick your both feet out of the sturrups and reach around and bite you in the small of the back so quick that the boys would be pulling his front hoofs out of your frame before you'd realize that the canter had begun. Nice horse, Buck. He like to eat Jonesy up one morning before Silver and me could get to the corral. Lord! The sounds made my blood run cold! Old Buck squealing like a boar-pig in a wolf trap, and Jonesy yelling, 'Help! Murder! Police!' Even that did not cure Jones from sticking his nose where it wasn't wanted. Why, once—but thunder! It would take me a long while to tell you all that happened to Jones.

"One thing that didn't hurt Kyle any in the campaign was that he was 'most as good-looking for a

man as she was for a woman. They made a pair to draw to, I tell you, loping over the prairie, full of health and youngness! You wouldn't want to see a prettier sight than they made, and you could see it at any time, for they were together whenever it was possible. Loys was so happy that it made you feel like a boy again to see her. She told me in private that it was wonderful how the air out here agreed with her, and I said it was considered mighty bracing, and never let on that they proclaimed their state of mind every time they looked at each other. I reckon old smart-Aleck Jonesy was the only party in the township who didn't understand. Kyle used to put vinegar in his coffee and things like that, and if you'd ask him, 'What's that fellow's name that runs the clothing store in town?' he'd come out of his trance and say 'Yes,' and smile very amiable, to show that he thoroughly admitted you were right.

"Well, things went as smooth and easy as bob-sledding until it came time for Loys to be moseying back to college again.

"Then Kyle took me into his confidence. I never was less astonished in my whole life, and I didn't tell him so. 'Well, what are you going to do about it?' says I.

"He kind of groaned and shook his head. "I dunno,' says he. 'Do you think she likes me, Red?' I felt like saying, 'Well, if you ain't got all the traits but the long ears, I miss my guess,' but I made allowances, and says I, 'Well, about *that* I don't think I ought to say anything; still, if I had only one eye left

I could see plain that her education's finished. She don't want any more college, that girl don't.'

"'Think not?' says he, bracing up. And then, by and by, they went out to ride, for Jonesy was good to the girl, I'll say that for him. He was willing to do anything for her in reason, according to his views. But Kyle wasn't in them views; he was out of the picture as far as husbands went.

"They came back at sunset, when the whole world was glowing red the same as they were. I reached for the field-glasses and took a squint at them. There was no harm in that, for they were well-behaved young folks. One look at their faces was enough. There were three of us in the bull-pen—Bob, and Wind-River Smith, and myself. We'd brought up a herd of calves from Nanley's ranch, and we were taking it easy. 'Boys,' says I, under my breath, 'they've made the riffle.'

"'No!' says they, and then everybody had to take a pull at the glasses.

"'Well, I'm glad,' says Smithy. And darn my buttons if that old hardshell's voice didn't shake. 'They're two of as nice kids as you'd find in many a weary day,' says he. 'And I wish 'em all the luck in the world.'

"'So do I,' says I, 'and I really think the best we could do for 'em would be to shoot Jones.'

"'Man! Won't he sizz!' says Bob. And you can't blame us old codgers if we had a laugh at that, although it was such a powerful serious matter to the youngsters.

" 'Let's go out and meet 'em,' says I. And away we went. They weren't a particle surprised. I suppose they thought the whole universe had stopped to look on. We pump-handled away and laughed, and Loys she laughed kind of teary, and Kyle he looked red in the face and proud and happy and ashamed of himself, and we all felt loosened up considerable, but I told him on the quiet, 'Take that fool grin off your face, unless you want Uncle Jones to drop the moment he sees you.'

"Now they only had three days left to get an action on them, as that was the time set for Loys to go back to college.

"Next day they held a council behind the big barn, and they called in Uncle Red—otherwise known as Big Red Saunders, or Chanta Seechee Red, which means 'Bad-heart Red' in Sioux language, and doesn't explain me by a durn sight—to get the benefit of his valuable advice.

" 'Skip,' says I. 'Fly for town and get married, and come back and tell Jonesy about it. It's a pesky sight stronger argument to tell him what you have done than what you're going to do.'

"They couldn't quite agree with that. They thought it was sneaky.

" 'So it is,' says I. 'The first art of war is understanding how to make a grand sneak. If you don't want to take my advice you can wait.' That didn't hit 'em just right either.

" 'What will we wait for?' says Kyle.

" 'Exercise—and the kind you won't take when

you get as old and sensible as me. You're taking long chances, both of you; but it's just like playing cards, you might as well put all your money on the first turn, win or lose, as to try and play system. Systems don't work in faro, nor love affairs, nor any other game of chance. Be gone. Put your marker on the grand raffle. In other words, take the first horse to town and get married. Ten chances to one Jonesy will have the laugh on you before the year is out.'

" 'I don't think you're a bit nice to-day, Red,' says Loys.

" 'He's jealous,' says Kyle.

" 'That's what I am, young man,' says I. 'If I had ten years off my shoulders, and a little of the glow off my hair, I'd give you a run for your alley that would leave you breathless at the wind-up.'

" 'I think your hair is a beautiful color, Red,' says Loys. 'Many a woman would like to have it.'

" 'Of course they would,' I answered. 'But they don't get it. I'm foxy, I am.' Still I was touched in a tender spot. That young woman knew just the right thing to say, by nature. 'Well, what are you young folks going to do?' I asked them.

"They decided that they'd think it over until next day, but that turned out to be too late, for what must Kyle do but get chucked from his horse and have his leg broke near the hip. You don't want to take any love affairs onto the back of a bad horse, now you mark me! There was no such thing as downing that boy when he was in his right mind.

"Now here was a hurrah! Loys, she dasn't cry, for fear of uncle, and Kyle, he used the sinfullest language known to the tongue of man. 'Twas the first time I'd ever heard him say anything much, but he made it clear that it wasn't because he couldn't.

" 'What will we do, Red? What will we do?' says he.

" 'Now,' says I, don't bile over like that, because it's bad for your leg.'

"He cussed the leg.

" 'Go on and tell me what we can do,' says he.

" 'When you ask me that, you've pulled the right bell,' says I. 'I'll tell you exactly what we'll do. I go for the doctor. Savvy? Well, I bring back the minister at the same time. Angevine, he loses the Jersey cow over in the cane-break, and uncle and Angevine go hunting her, for not even Loys is ace high in uncle's mind alongside that cow. The rest is easy.'

" 'Red, you're a brick—you're the best fellow alive,' says Kyle, nearly squeezing the hand off me.

" 'I've tried to conceal it all my life, but I knew it would be discovered some day,' says I. 'Well, I suppose I'd better break the news to Loys—'twouldn't be any more than polite."

" 'Oh, Lord! I wonder if she'll be willing?' says he.

" 'No reason I shouldn't turn an honest dollar on the transaction—I'll bet you a month's wages she is,' says I. He wanted to do it, thinking I was in earnest, but I laughed at him.

"She *was* willing, all right—even anxious. There's

some women, and men, too, for that matter, who go through life like a cat through a back alley, not caring a cuss for either end or the middle. They would have been content to wait. Not so Loys. She wanted her Kyle, her poor Kyle, and she wanted him quick. That's the kind of people for me! Your cautious folk are all the time falling down wells because their eyes are up in the air, keeping tabs so that they can dodge shooting stars.

"Now, I had a minister friend up in town, Father Slade by name. No, he was not a Catholic, I think. They called him 'Father' because it fitted him. His church had a steeple on it, anyhow, so it was no maverick. Just what particular kind of religion the old man had I don't know, but I should say he was a homeopath on a guess. He looked it. 'Twas a comfort to see him coming down the street, his old face shining in his white hair like a shriveled pink apple in a snowdrift, God-blessing everything in sight—good, bad, or indifferent. He had something pleasant to say to all. We was quite friends, and every once in a while we'd have a chin about things.

" 'Are you keeping straight, Red?' he'd ask when we parted.

" 'Um,' I'd say, 'I'm afraid you'd notice a bend here and there, if you slid your eyes along the edge.'

" 'Well, keep as straight as you can; don't give up trying, my boy,' he'd tell me, mighty earnest, and I'd feel ashamed of myself clear around the corner.

"I knew the old man would do me a favor if it could be done, so I pulled out easy in my mind.

"First place, I stopped at the doctor's, because I felt they might fix up the marrying business some other time, but if a leg that's broke in the upper joint ain't set right, you can see a large dark-complected hunk of trouble over the party's left shoulder for the rest of his days. The doctor was out, so I left word for him what was wanted, and to be ready when I got back, and pulled for Father Slade's. The old gentleman had the rheumatism, and he groaned when I come in. Rheumatism's no disease for people who can't swear.

" 'How are you, my boy?' says he; 'I'm glad to see you. Here am I, an old man, nipped by the leg, and much wanting to talk to somebody.'

"I passed the time of day to him, but felt kind of blue. This didn't look like keeping my word with the kids. I really hated to say anything to the old man, knowing his disposition; still I felt I had to, and I out with my story.

" 'Dear! dear!' says he. 'The hurry and skurry of young folks! How idle it seems when you get fifty years away from it, and see how little anything counts! For all that, I thank God,' says he, 'that there's a little red left in my blood yet, which makes me sympathize with them. But the girl's people object, you say?'

"I made that all clear to him. 'The girl's *always* all right, Father,' says I, 'and as for the man in this case, my word for him.'

"Now it ain't just the right thing for me to say, but seeing as I've never had anything in particular

to be modest about, and I'm proud of what the old gentleman told me, I'm going to repeat it.

"'Your word is good for me, Red,' says he. 'You're a mischievous boy at times, but your heart and your head are both reliable; give me your arm to the wagon.'

"Then I felt mighty sorry to think of lugging that poor old man all that ways.

"'Here!' says I. 'Now you sit down again; don't you do nothing of the sort—you ain't fit.'

"He put his hand on my shoulder and hobbled his weight off the game leg.

"'Reddy, I was sitting there thinking when you came in—thinking of how comfortable it was to be in an easy-chair with my foot on a stool, and then I thought, "If the Lord should send me some work to do, would I be willing?" Now, thanks be to Him! I *am* willing, and glad to find myself so, and I do not believe there's any work more acceptable to Him than the union of young folk who love each other. Ouch!' says he, as that foot touched the ground. Perhaps you'd better pick me up and carry me bodily.'

"So I did it, the old housekeeper following us with an armful of things and jawing the both of us—him for a fool and me for a villain. She was a strong-minded old lady, and I wish I could remember some of her talk—it was great.

"We went around and got the doctor.

"'Hoo!' says he. 'Is it as bad as that?' I winked at Father Slade.

" 'It's a-plenty worse than that,' says I; 'you won't know the half of it till you get down there.'

"But of course we had to tell him, and he was tickled. Funny what an interest everybody takes in these happenings. He wanted all the details.

" 'By Jove!' says he, 'the man whose feelings ain't the least dimmed by a broken leg—horse rolled on him, you said? Splintered it, probably—that man is one of the right sort. He'll do to tie to.'

"When we reached the ranch the boys were lined up to meet us. 'Hurry along!' they called. 'Angey can't keep uncle amused all day!'

"So we hustled. Kyle was for being married first, and then having his leg set, but I put my foot down flat. It had gone long enough now, and I wasn't going to have him cripping it all his life. But the doctor worked like a man who gets paid by the piece, and in less than no time we were able to call Loys in.

"Wind-River Smith spoke to get to give the bride away, and we let him have it.

"We'd just got settled to business when in comes Angevine, puffing like a buffalo. 'For Heaven's sakes! Ain't you finished yet?' says he; 'well, you want to be at it, for the old man ain't over two minutes behind me, coming fast. I took the distance in ten-foot steps. Just my luck! Foot slipped when I was talking to him, and I dropped a remark that made him suspicious—I wouldn't have done it for a ton of money—but it's too late now. I'll down him and hold him out there if you say so.'

"Well, sir, at this old Father Slade stood right up, forgetting that foot entirely.

" 'Children, be ready,' says he, and he went over the line for a record.

" 'Hurry there!' hollers old Bob from the outside, where he was on watch; 'here comes uncle up the long coulee!'

" 'What are your names?' says Father Slade. They told him, both red'ning.

" 'Do you, Kyle, take this woman, Loys, to have and keep track of, come hell or high water, her heirs and assigns forever?'—or such a matter—says he, all in one breath. They both said they did.

"Things flew till we came to the ring. There was a hitch. We had plumb forgotten that important article. For a minute I felt stingy; then I cussed myself for a mean old long-horn, and dived into my box.

" 'Here, take this!' I says. 'It was my mother's!'

" 'Oh, Red! You mustn't part with that!' cried Loys, her eyes filling up.

" 'Don't waste time talking; I put through what I tackle. Hurry, please, Father.'

" 'Has anybody any objections to these proceedings?' says he.

" 'I have,' says I, 'but I won't mention 'em. Give them the verdict.'

" 'I pronounce you man and wife. Let us pray,' says he.

" 'What's that?' screeches Uncle Jonesy from the doorway. And then he gave us the queerest prayer you ever heard in your life. He stood on one toe

and clawed chunks out of the air while he delivered it.

"He seemed to have it in for me in particular. 'You villain! You rascal! You red-headed rascal! You did this! I know you did!'

" 'Oh, uncle!' says I, 'forgive me!' With that I hugged him right up to me, and he filled my bosom full of smothered language.

" 'Cheese it, you little cuss!' I whispered in his ear, 'or I'll break every rib in your poor old chest!' I came in on him a trifle, just to show him what I could do if I tried.

" ' 'Nuff!' he wheezes. 'Quit. 'Nuff.'

" 'Go up and congratulate 'em,' I whispered again.

" 'I won't,' says he. 'Ouch! Yes, I will! I will!' So up he goes, grinding his teeth.

" 'I wish you every happiness,' he grunts.

" 'Won't you forgive me, uncle?' begs Loys.

" 'Some other time; some other time!' he hollers, and he pranced out of the house like a hostyle spider, the maddest little man in the territory.

"Loys had a hard time of it until Kyle got so he could travel, and they went up to the Yellowstone with a team for a wedding trip.

"The rest of Loys' folks was in an unpleasant frame of mind, too. They sent out her brother, and while I'd have took most anything from Loys' brother, there comes a place where human nature is human nature, and the upshot of it was I planked that young man gently but firmly across my knees. Suffering Ike! But he was one sassy young man! Howsomever, the

whole outfit came round in time—all except uncle and me. He used to grit his teeth together till the sparks flew when he saw me. I was afraid he'd bust a blood-vessel in one of them fits, so I quit. I hated to let go of the old ranch, but I'm pretty well fixed—I'm superintendent here. It's Kyle's ranch, you know. That's his brand—the queer-looking thing on the left hip of that critter, over the vented hash-knife. Loys' invention, that is. She says it's a cherublim, but we call it the 'flying flap-jack.' There's a right smart lot of beef critters toting that signal around this part of the country. Kyle's one of the fellers that rises like a setting of bread—quiet and gentle, but steady and sure. He's going to the State Legislature next year. 'Twon't do no harm to have one honest man in the outfit.

"Now, perhaps if I'd married some nice woman I might have had 1,000 steers of my own, and a chance to make rules and regulations for my fellow-citizens —and then again I might have took to gambling and drinking and raising blazes, and broke my poor wife's broom-handle with my hard head. So I reckon we'll let it slide as it is. Now you straddle that cayuse of yours and come along with me and I'll show you some rattling colts."

THE WILD HORSE OF TARTARY

BY CLARA MORRIS

Mrs. Frederick C. Harriott (born in Toronto, Canada, in 1849) writes, as she has acted, under her maiden name of Clara Morris. The same temperamental genius which won her the reputation of the greatest emotional actress of the American stage distinguishes her literary work. The graphic power of the born story-teller is displayed in her reminiscences of the stage no less than in her fiction. Of this "The Wild Horse of Tartary" is a convincing illustration. The story appeared first in "McClure's Magazine" and afterward in Miss Morris's book, "Life on the Stage."

THE WILD HORSE OF TARTARY

BY CLARA MORRIS

BUT there! Just as I start to speak of my third season, I seem to look into a pair of big, mild eyes that say, "Can it be that you mean to pass *me* by? Do you forget that 'twas I who turned the great-sensation scene of a play into a side-splitting farce?"—and I shake my head and answer truthfully, "I can not forget. I shall never forget your work that night in Columbus, when you appeared as the 'fiery untamed steed' (may Heaven forgive you!) in 'Mazeppa'!"

Mr. Robert E. J. Miles—or "All-the-Alphabet Miles," as he was frequently called—was starring at that time in the "horse" drama, doing such plays as "The Cataract of the Ganges," "Mazeppa," "Sixteen-String Jack," etc. "Mazeppa" was the favorite in Columbus, and both the star and the manager regretted that they had billed the other plays in advance, as there would have been more money in "Mazeppa" alone. Mr. Miles carried with him two horses; one, for "The Wild Horse of Tartary," was an exquisitely formed, satin-coated creature, who looked wickedly at you from the corner of her blazing eye: who bared her teeth savagely, and struck out with her forefeet, as well as with her hind ones. When she came rearing,

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plunging, biting, snapping, whirling, and kicking her way on to the stage, the scarlet lining of her dilating nostrils and the foam flying from her mouth made our screams very natural ones, and the women in front used to huddle close together, or even cover their faces.

One creature only did this beautiful vixen love—R. E. J. Miles. She fawned upon him like a dog, and did tricks for him like a dog, but she was a terror to the rest of mankind. It was really a thrilling scene when Mazeppa was bound, his head tailward, his feet maneward, to the back of that maddened beast. She seemed to bite and tear at him, and when set free, she stood straight up for a dreadful moment, in which she really endangered his life; then, with a wild neigh, she tore off up the "runs" as if fiends pursued her, with the man stretched helplessly along her inky back. The curtain used to go up again and again, it was so very effective.

The other horse who traveled with Mr. Miles was an entirely different sort. He would have been described—according to the State where he happened to be—as a piebald, a skewbald, a pinto, or a calico horse. He was very large, mostly of a satiny white color, with big absurdly-shaped markings of bright bay. He was one of that breed of horses which in livery stables are always known as "Doctor" or "Judge." Benevolence beamed from his large, clear eyes, and he looked so mildly wise one half expected to see him put on spectacles. The boy at the stable said one day, as he fed him, "I wouldn't wonder if this ol' parson of a hoss asked a blessin' on them there oats—I wouldn't!"

I don't know whether Old Bob, as he was called, had any speed or not, but if he had it was useless to him; for alas! he was never allowed to reach the goal under any circumstances. He was always ridden by the villain, and therefore had to be overtaken. Besides that he generally had to carry double, as the desperado usually fled holding the fainting heroine before him, and though Old Bob successfully leaped chasms thus heavily handicapped—for truly he was a mighty jumper—nevertheless he was compelled to accept defeat. Mr. Miles always came rushing up to the rescue on the black horse, when Bob was very lucky, indeed, if he didn't have to roll about and die; and he was a very impatient dead horse, often amusing the audience by lifting his head to see if the curtain was not down, and then dropping dead again, with a sigh the whole house could hear.

Anyway, being continually pushed back into second place, and compelled to listen to the unearned applause bestowed upon the beautiful black, Old Bob lost all ambition professionally, and he simply became a gourmet and a glutton. He lived to eat. A woman in his eyes was a sort of perambulating storehouse of cake, crackers, apples, sugar, etc.; only his love for children was disinterested. The moment he was loose he went off on a search for children, no matter whose so long as he found some; then down he would go on his knees, and wait to be pulled and patted. His habit of gathering very small people up by their back breadths, and carrying them a little way before dropping them, always filled the air with wild shrieks of

laughter. In the theatre he walked sedately about before rehearsal began, and though we knew his attentions were entirely selfish, he was so urbane, so complaisant in his manner of going through us, that we could not resist his advances, and each day and night we packed our pockets and our muffs with such provender as women seldom carry about in their clothes. All our gloves smelled as though we worked at a cider mill.

While the play was going on, Old Bob spent a great part of his time standing on the first of the screened platforms connecting the runs, and as every one of us had to pass him on our way to dress, he demanded toll of all. Fruits, domestic or foreign, he received with gentle eagerness. Cake, crackers, and sugar—the velvety nose snuffed at them approvingly, and if a girl, believing herself late, tried to pass him swiftly by, his look of amazement was comical to behold, and in an instant his iron-shod foot was playing a veritable devil's tattoo on the resounding board platform. If that failed to win attention, following her with his eyes, he lifted up his voice in a full-chested "Neigh—hay—hay—*haay!*" that brought her back in a hurry with her toll of sugar. And that piebald hypocrite would scrunch it with such a piteously ravenous air that the girl quite forgot the satirical words her landlady had directed against her recently-acquired sweet tooth.

The dreadful night of disaster came late in the week. I don't recall the name of the play, but in that one piece the beautiful, high-spirited black mare had

to carry double up the runs. John Carroll and Miss Lucy Cutler were the riders. Mr. Carroll claimed that he could ride a little, and though he was afraid, he was ashamed to own it. Mr. Miles said in the morning: "Now if you are the least bit timid, Mr. Carroll, say so, and I will fasten the bridle reins to the saddle pommel, and Queen will carry you up of her own accord as true as a die and as safe as a rock; but if you are going to hold the bridle, for God's sake be careful! If it was Old Bob, you could saw him as much as you liked and he would pay no attention, but Queen, who has a tender mouth, is half-mad with excitement at night, and a very slight pressure on the wrong rein will mean a forty or fifty-foot fall for you all!"

Miss Cutler expressed great fear, when Mr. Miles surprisedly said: "Why, you have ridden with me twice this week without a sign of fear?"

"Oh, yes," she answered, "but *you* know what you are doing—*you* are a horseman!"

It was an unfortunate speech, and in face of it Mr. Carroll's vanity would not allow him to admit his anxiety. "He could ride well enough and he would handle the reins himself," he declared.

During the day his fears grew upon him. Foolishly and wickedly he resorted to spirits to try to build up some Dutch courage. Then when the scene came on, half-blind with fear and the liquor—which he was not used to—as he felt the fierce creature beneath him rushing furiously up the steep incline, a sort of madness came upon him. Without rhyme or reason he

pulled desperately at the nigh rein, and in the same breath their three bodies were hurling downward like thunderbolts. It was an awful sight! I looked at them as they descended, and for the fraction of a second they seemed to be suspended in the air. They were all upside down. All, without turning or twisting, fell straight as plummets—the horse, the same as the man and woman, had its feet straight in the air. Ugh! the striking. Ugh! never mind details. The curtain was rushed down. Miss Cutler was picked up dazed, stunned, but without a mark. Mr. Carroll crept away unaided amid the confusion, the sorrow, and the tears, for splendid Queen was doomed. Though Mr. Miles had risked his own life in an awful leap to save her from falling through a trap, he could not save her life, and the almost human groan with which she dropped her lovely head upon her master's shoulders, and his streaming eyes as he tenderly wiped the blood from her velvety nostrils, made even the scene-shifters rub their eyes upon the backs of their hands. While Queen was half-carried to the fire-engine house next door (her stable was too far away), some one went before the curtain and assured the audience that the accident was very slight, and that the lady and gentleman would both appear presently. The audience applauded in a rather doubtful manner, for several ladies had fainted, and the carrying out of a helpless person in a place of amusement always has a depressing effect upon the lookers-on. Meantime Mr. Carroll was getting his wrist bandaged and a cut on his face patched up, while a basket of

sawdust was hurriedly procured that certain cruel stains might be concealed. The orchestra played briskly, and the play went on. That's the one thing we can be sure of in this world—that the play will go on. Late that night, beautiful Queen died, with her head resting on her master's knee.

Now "Mazeppa" was billed for the next night, and there were many consultations held in the office and on the stage. "The Wild Horse of Tartary" was gone. It was impossible to find a new horse in one day. "Change the bill!" said Mr. Miles. "And have an empty house," answered Mr. Ellsler.

"But what can I do for a horse?" asked Mr. Miles. "Use Old Bob," answered Mr. Ellsler.

"Good Lord!" groaned Bob's master. They argued long, but neither wanted to lose the good house, so the bill was allowed to stand, and "Mazeppa" was performed with Old Bob as "The Wild Horse of Tartary." Think of it—that ingratiating Old Bob, that follower of women and playmate of children! Why, even the great bay blotches on his white old hide made one think of the circus, of paper hoops, and of *training*, rather than of wildness. With the hope of making him at least impatient and restless, he had been deprived of his supper, and the result was a settled gloom, an air of melancholy, that made Mr. Miles swear under his breath every time he looked at him.

The play moved along nicely, the house was large, and seemed pleased. Mazeppa fell into his enemy's hands, the sentence was pronounced, and the order followed, "Bring forth the fiery, untamed steed!"

The women of the audience began to draw close to their escorts. Many of them remembered the biting, kicking entrance of the black, and were frightened beforehand. The orchestra responded with incidental, creepy music, but that was all. Over in the entrance, Old Bob, surrounded by the four men who were supposed to restrain him, stood quietly. But those who sat in the left box heard "get-ups!" and "go-ons!" and the cluckings of many tongues. The mighty Khan of Tartary (who could not see that entrance) thought he had not been heard, and he roared again, "Bring forth the fiery, untamed steed!" Another pause; the house tittered; then some one hit Old Bob a crack across the rump with a whip, at which he gave a switch of his tail, and gently ambled on to the stage. He stopped of his own accord at the centre, and, lowering his head, stretched out his neck and sniffed at the leader of the orchestra, precisely as a dog sniffs at a stranger. It was deliciously ridiculous. We girls were supposed to scream with fear of the "wild horse," and alas! we were only too obedient; crowding down at the right, clinging together in attitudes of extremest fright, we shrieked and screeched until Old Bob pricked up his ears, and looked so astonished at our conduct that the audience simply rocked back and forth with laughter. And all the time Mazeppa was saying things that did not seem at all like prayers. Finally he gave orders for the men to surround Bob, which they did, and then a sharp little spike was used—that was to make him dance about pretty lively. It pricked him on the shoulder, and the

"wild horse" stood and switched his tail. It pricked him again; he switched his tail again. The men had by this time grown careless, and when the spike was finally used at his mane, he suddenly kicked one of them clear of the stage, and then resumed his unruffled calm. The public thought it was having fun all this time, but pretty soon it knew it. Nothing under heaven could disturb the gentle serenity of that doglike old horse. When Mazeppa was brought forward to be bound upon Old Bob's back, instead of pulling away, and rearing and fighting against the burden, his one and only quick movement was his violent effort to break away from his tormentors and welcome his master joyously.

"Oh!" groaned Miles, "kill him, somebody, before he kills me!"

While Mazeppa was being bound on the "wild horse's" back our instructions were to scream; therefore we screamed as before, and, being on the verge of insanity, Miles lifted his head from the horse's back, and said, "Oh, shut up, do!" The audience heard, and—well, it laughed some more, and then it discovered, when the men sprang away and left the horse free to dash madly up the mountain, that Mazeppa had kept one foot unbound to kick Old Bob with; and truly it did seem that the audience was going into convulsions—such laughter, pierced every now and then by the shrill scream of hysterics. Old Bob ambled up the first run all right, but, alas! for poor Mazeppa, as the "wild horse" reached the first platform, a woman passed on the way to her room,

and hungry Bob instantly stopped to negotiate a loan in sugar. Oh, it was dreadful—the wait—and when finally he reappeared, trotting—yes, trotting up the next run—Mr. Miles's foot could be plainly seen kicking with the regularity of a piston-rod, while his remarks were—well, they were irregular in the extreme!

Of course the play was hopelessly ruined. The audience laughed at the slightest mention of the "wild horse," and when the shepherds found horse and man, lying at the foot of the mountain, worn out and exhausted, the building seemed to shake with the laughter.

When the play was over at last, Old Bob walked up to his master and mumbled his hand. Mr. Miles pushed him away with pretended anger, crying: "You infernal old idiot, I'd sell you for a three-cent stamp with gum on it!"

Bob looked hard at him a moment; then he calmly crossed behind him and mumbled his other hand, and Mr. Miles pulled his ears, and said that he, himself, was the idiot for expecting an untrained, unrehearsed horse to play such a part, and Old Bob agreeing with him perfectly, they were, as always, at peace with each other.

A DERELICT

BY RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

Richard Harding Davis (born in Philadelphia in 1864) has a vigorous style of marked individuality which finds expression in two distinct though related forms of literature: special and war correspondence, and fiction dealing with modern types of character and contemporaneous events. No work more typical of his genius could be selected than "A Derelict," a story of journalism in the stress of a war crisis, in which two extreme but thoroughly representative types of newspaper men are brought into vivid contrast.

A DERELICT

BY RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

WHEN the warships of a navy lie cleared for action outside a harbor, and the warships of the country with which they are at war lie cleared for action inside the harbor, there is likely to be trouble. Trouble between warships is news, and wherever there is news there is always a representative of the Consolidated Press.

As long as Sampson blockaded Havana and the army beat time back of the Tampa Bay Hotel, the central office for news was at Key West, but when Cervera slipped into Santiago Harbor and Sampson stationed his battleships at its mouth, Key West lost her only excuse for existence, and the press-boats buried their bows in the waters of the Florida Straits and raced for the cable station at Port Antonio. It was then that Keating, the "star" man of the Consolidated Press Syndicate, was forced to abandon his young bride and the rooms he had engaged for her at the Key West Hotel, and accompany his tug to the distant island of Jamaica.

Keating was a good and faithful servant to the Consolidated Press. He was a correspondent after its own making, an industrious collector of facts. The

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Consolidated Press did not ask him to comment on what it sent him to see; it did not require nor desire his editorial opinions or impressions. It was no part of his work to go into the motives which led to the event of news interest which he was sent to report, nor to point out what there was of it which was dramatic, pathetic, or outrageous.

The Consolidated Press, being a mighty corporation, which daily fed seven hundred different newspapers, could not hope to please the policy of each, so it compromised by giving the facts of the day fairly set down, without heat, prejudice, or enthusiasm. This was an excellent arrangement for the papers that subscribed for the service of the Consolidated Press, but it was death to the literary strivings of the Consolidated Press correspondent.

"We do not want descriptive writing," was the warning which the manager of the great syndicate was always flashing to its correspondents. "We do not pay you to send us pen-pictures or prose-poems. We want the facts, all the facts, and nothing but the facts."

And so, when at a Presidential convention a theatrical speaker sat down after calling James G. Blaine "a plumed knight," each of the "special" correspondents present wrote two columns in an effort to describe how the people who heard the speech behaved in consequence, but the Consolidated Press man telegraphed, "At the conclusion of these remarks the cheering lasted sixteen minutes."

No event of news value was too insignificant to escape the watchfulness of the Consolidated Press,

none so great that it could not handle it from its inception up to the moment when it ceased to be quoted in the news market of the world. Each night, from thousands of spots all over the surface of the globe, it received thousands of facts, of cold, accomplished facts. It knew that a tidal wave had swept through China, a cabinet had changed in Chili, in Texas an express train had been held up and robbed, "Spike" Kennedy had defeated the "Dutchman" in New Orleans, the "Oregon" had coaled outside of Rio Janeiro Harbor, the Cape Verde fleet had been seen at anchor off Cadiz; it had been located in the harbor of San Juan, Porto Rico; it had been sighted steaming slowly past Fortress Monroe; and the Navy Department reported that the "St. Paul" had discovered the lost squadron of Spain in the harbor of Santiago. This last fact was the one which sent Keating to Jamaica. Where he was sent was a matter of indifference to Keating. He had worn the collar of the Consolidated Press for so long a time that he was callous. A board meeting—a mine disaster—an Indian uprising—it was all one to Keating. He collected facts and his salary. He had no enthusiasms, he held no illusions. The prestige of the mammoth syndicate he represented gained him an audience where men who wrote for one paper only were repulsed on the threshold. Senators, governors, the presidents of great trusts and railroad systems, who fled from the reporter of a local paper as from a leper, would send for Keating and dictate to him whatever it was they wanted the people of the United States to believe, for

when they talked to Keating they talked to many millions of readers. Keating, in turn, wrote out what they had said to him and transmitted it, without color or bias, to the Clearing-house of the Consolidated Press. His "stories," as all newspaper writings are called by men who write them, were as picturesque reading as the quotations of a stock-ticker. The personal equation appeared no more offensively than it does in a page of typewriting in his work.

Consequently, he was dear to the heart of the Consolidated Press, and, as a "safe" man, was sent to the beautiful harbor of Santiago—to a spot where there were warships cleared for action, Cubans in ambush, naked marines fighting for a foothold at Guantanamo, palm-trees and coral-reefs—in order that he might look for "facts."

There was not a newspaper man left at Key West who did not writhe with envy and anger when he heard of it. When the wire was closed for the night, and they had gathered at Josh Kerry's, Keating was the storm-centre of their indignation.

"What a chance!" they protested. "What a story! It's the chance of a lifetime." They shook their heads mournfully and lashed themselves with pictures of its possibilities.

"And just fancy its being wasted on old Keating," said the "Journal" man. "Why, everything's likely to happen out there, and whatever does happen he'll make it read like a Congressional Record. Why, when I heard of it I cabled the office that if the paper would send me I'd not ask for any salary for six months."

"And Keating's kicking because he has to go," growled the "Sun" man. "Yes, he is, I saw him last night, and he was sore because he'd just moved his wife down here. He said if he'd known this was coming he'd have let her stay in New York. He says he'll lose money on this assignment, having to support himself and his wife in two different places."

Norris, "the star man" of the "World," howled with indignation.

"Good Lord!" he said, "is that all he sees in it? Why, there never was such a chance. I tell you, some day soon all of those warships will let loose at each other and there will be the best story that ever came over the wire, and if there isn't, it's a regular loaf anyway. It's a picnic, that's what it is, at the expense of the Consolidated Press. Why, he ought to pay them to let him go. Can't you see him, confound him, sitting under a palm-tree in white flannels, with a glass of Jamaica rum in his fist, while we're dodging yellow fever on this coral-reef, and losing our salaries on a crooked roulette wheel?"

"I wonder what Jamaica rum is like as a steady drink," mused the ex-baseball reporter, who had been converted into a war correspondent by the purchase of a white yachting cap.

"It won't be long before Keating finds out," said the "Journal" man.

"Oh, I didn't know that," ventured the new reporter, who had just come South from Boston. "I thought he didn't drink. I never see Keating in here with the rest of the boys."

"You wouldn't," said Norris. "He only comes in here by himself, and he drinks by himself. He's one of those confidential drunkards. You give some men whiskey, and it's like throwing kerosene on a fire, isn't it? It makes them wave their arms about and talk loud and break things, but you give it to another man and it's like throwing kerosene on a cork mat. It just soaks in. That's what Keating is. He's a sort of a cork mat."

"I shouldn't think the C. P. would stand for that," said the Boston man.

"It wouldn't if it ever interfered with his work, but he's never fallen down on a story yet. And the sort of stuff he writes is machine-made; a man can write C. P. stuff in his sleep."

One of the "World" men looked up and laughed.

"I wonder if he'll run across Channing out there," he said. The men at the table smiled, a kindly, indulgent smile. The name seemed to act upon their indignation as a shower upon the close air of a summer day. "That's so," said Norris. "He wrote me last month from Port-au-Prince that he was moving on to Jamaica. He wrote me from that club there at the end of the wharf. He said he was at that moment introducing the President to a new cocktail, and as he had no money to pay his passage to Kingston he was trying to persuade him to send him on there as his Haitian Consul. He said in case he couldn't get appointed Consul, he had an offer to go as cook on a fruit tramp."

The men around the table laughed. It was the

pleased, proud laugh that flutters the family dinner-table when the infant son and heir says something precocious and impudent.

"Who is Channing?" asked the Boston man.

There was a pause, and the correspondents looked at Norris.

"Channing is a sort of a derelict," he said. "He drifted into New York last Christmas from the 'Omaha Bee.' He's been on pretty nearly every paper in the country."

"What's he doing in Haiti?"

"He went there on the 'Admiral Decatur' to write a filibustering story about carrying arms across to Cuba. Then the war broke out and he's been trying to get back to Key West, and now, of course, he'll make for Kingston. He cabled me yesterday, at my expense, to try and get him a job on our paper. If the war hadn't come on he had a plan to beat his way around the world. And he'd have done it, too. I never saw a man who wouldn't help Charlie along, or lend him a dollar." He glanced at the faces about him and winked at the Boston man. "They all of them look guilty, don't they?" he said.

"Charlie Channing," murmured the baseball reporter, gently, as though he were pronouncing the name of a girl. He raised his glass. "Here's to Charlie Channing," he repeated. Norris set down his empty glass and showed it to the Boston man.

"That's his only enemy," he said. "Write! Heavens, how that man can write, and he'd almost rather do anything else. There isn't a paper in New

York that wasn't glad to get him, but they couldn't keep him a week. It was no use talking to him. Talk! I've talked to him until three o'clock in the morning. Why, it was I made him send his first Chinatown story to the 'International Magazine,' and they took it like a flash and wrote him for more, but he blew in the check they sent him and didn't even answer their letter. He said after he'd had the fun of writing a story he didn't care whether it was published in a Sunday paper or in white vellum, or never published at all. And so long as he knew he wrote it, he didn't care whether any one else knew it or not. Why, when that English reviewer—what's his name?—that friend of Kipling's—passed through New York, he said to a lot of us at the Press Club, 'You've got a young man here on Park Row—an opium-eater, I should say, by the look of him—who, if he would work and leave whiskey alone, would make us all sweat.' That's just what he said, and he's the best in England!"

"Charlie's a genius," growled the baseball reporter, defiantly. "I say, he's a genius."

The Boston man shook his head. "My boy," he began sententiously, "genius is nothing more than hard work, and a man—"

Norris slapped the table with his hand.

"Oh, no, it's not," he jeered fiercely, "and don't you go off believing it is, neither. I've worked. I've worked twelve hours a day. Keating even has worked eighteen hours a day—all his life—but we never wrote 'The Passing of the Highbinders,' nor the 'Ships that Never Came Home,' nor 'Tales of the Tenderloin,' and

we never will. I'm a better news-gatherer than Charlie, I can collect facts and I can put them together well enough too, so that if a man starts to read my story he'll probably follow it to the bottom of the column, and he may turn over the page, too. But I can't say the things because I can't see the things that Charlie sees. Why, one night we sent him out on a big railroad story. It was a beat, we'd got it by accident, and we had it all to ourselves, but Charlie came across a blind beggar on Broadway with a dead dog. The dog had been run over, and the blind beggar couldn't find his way home without him, and was sitting on the curbstone, weeping over the mongrel. Well, when Charlie came back to the office he said he couldn't find out anything about that railroad deal, but that he'd write them a dog story. Of course, they were raging crazy, but he sat down just as though it was no concern of his, and, sure enough, he wrote the dog story. And the next day over five hundred people stopped in at the office on their way downtown and left dimes and dollars to buy that man a new dog. Now, hard work won't do that."

Keating had been taking breakfast in the wardroom of H. M. S. "Indefatigable." As an acquaintance the officers had not found him an undoubted acquisition, but he was the representative of seven hundred papers, and when the "Indefatigable's" ice-machine broke he had loaned the officers' mess a hundred pounds of it from his own boat.

The cruiser's gig carried Keating to the wharf, the crew tossed their oars and the boatswain touched his

cap and asked, mechanically, "Shall I return to the ship, sir?"

Channing, stretched on the beach, with his back to a palm-tree, observed the approach of Keating with cheerful approbation.

"It is gratifying to me," he said, "to see the press treated with such consideration. You came in just like Cleopatra in her barge. If the flag had been flying, and you hadn't steered so badly, I should have thought you were at least an admiral. How many guns does the British Navy give a Consolidated Press reporter when he comes over the side?"

Keating dropped to the sand and, crossing his legs under him, began tossing shells at the water.

"They gave this one a damned good breakfast," he said, "and some very excellent white wine. Of course, the ice-machine was broken, it always is, but then Chablis never should be iced if it's the real thing."

"Chablis! Ice! Hah!" snorted Channing. "Listen to him! Do you know what I had for breakfast?"

Keating turned away uncomfortably and looked toward the ships in the harbor.

"Well, never mind," said Channing, yawning luxuriously. "The sun is bright, the sea is blue, and the confidences of this old palm are soothing. He's a great old gossip, this palm." He looked up into the rustling fronds and smiled. "He whispers me to sleep," he went on, "or he talks me awake—talks about all sorts of things—things he has seen—cyclones, wrecks, and strange ships and Cuban refugees and

Spanish spies and lovers that meet here on moonlight nights. It's always moonlight in Port Antonio, isn't it?"

"You ought to know, you've been here longer than I," said Keating.

"And how do you like it, now that you have got to know it better? Pretty heavenly, eh?"

"Pretty heavenly!" snorted Keating. "Pretty much the other place! What good am I doing? What's the sense of keeping me here? Cervera isn't going to come out, and the people at Washington won't let Sampson go in. Why, those ships have been there a month now, and they'll be there just where they are now when you and I are bald. I'm no use here. All I do is to thrash across there every day and eat up more coal than the whole squadron burns in a month. Why, that tug of mine's costing the C. P. six hundred dollars a day, and I'm not sending them news enough to pay for setting it up. Have you seen 'em yet?"

"Seen what? Your stories?"

"No, the ships."

"Yes, Scudder took me across once in the 'Iduna.' I haven't got a paper yet, so I couldn't write anything, but—"

"Well, you've seen all there is to it, then; you wouldn't see any more if you went over every day. It's just the same old harbor-mouth, and the same old Morro Castle, and the same old ships drifting up and down; the 'Brooklyn,' full of smoke-stacks, and the 'New York,' with her two bridges, and all the rest of

them looking just as they've looked for the last four weeks. There's nothing in that. Why don't they send me to Tampa with the army and Shafter—that's where the story is."

"Oh, I don't know," said Channing, shaking his head. "I thought it was bully!"

"Bully, what was bully?"

"Oh, the picture," said Channing, doubtfully, "and —and what it meant. What struck me about it was that it was so hot, and lazy, and peaceful, that they seemed to be just drifting about—just what you complain of. I don't know what I expected to see; I think I expected they'd be racing around in circles, tearing up the water and throwing broadsides at Morro Castle as fast as firecrackers.

"But they lay broiling there in the heat just as though they were becalmed. They seemed to be asleep on their anchor-chains. It reminded me of a big bulldog lying in the sun with his head on his paws and his eyes shut. You think he's asleep, and you try to tiptoe past him, but when you're in reach of his chain—he's at your throat, what? It seemed so funny to think of our being really at war. I mean the United States, and with such an old-established firm as Spain. It seems so presumptuous in a young republic, as though we were strutting around, singing, 'I'm getting a big boy now.' I felt like saying, 'Oh, come off, and stop playing you're a world power, and get back into your red sash and knickerbockers, or you'll get spanked!' It seems as though we must be such a lot of amateurs. But when I went over the side of the

'New York' I felt like kneeling down on her deck and begging every jacky to kick me. I felt about as useless as a fly on a locomotive engine. Amateurs! Why, they might have been in the business since the days of the ark; all of them might have been descended from bloody pirates; they twisted those eight-inch guns around for us just as though they were bicycles, and the whole ship moved and breathed and thought, too, like a human being, and all the captains of the other warships about her were watching for her to give the word. All of them stripped and eager and ready—like a lot of jockeys holding in the big race-horses, and each of them with his eyes on the starter. And I liked the way they all talk about Sampson, and the way the ships move over the stations like parts of one machine, just as he had told them to do.

"Scudder introduced me to him, and he listened while we did the talking, but it was easy to see who was the man in the Conning Tower. Keating—my boy!" Channing cried, sitting upright in his enthusiasm, "he's put a combination-lock on that harbor that can't be picked—and it'll work whether Sampson's asleep in his berth, or fifteen miles away, or killed on the bridge. He doesn't have to worry, he knows his trap will work—he ought to, he set it."

Keating shrugged his shoulders, tolerantly.

"Oh, I see that side of it," he assented. "I see all there is in it for *you*, the sort of stuff you write, Sunday-special stuff, but there's no *news* in it. I'm not paid to write mail letters, and I'm not down here to interview palm-trees either."

"Why, you old fraud!" laughed Channing. "You know you're having the time of your life here. You're the pet of Kingston society—you know you are. I only wish I were half as popular. I don't seem to belong, do I? I guess it's my clothes. That English Colonel at Kingston always scowls at me as though he'd like to put me in irons, and whenever I meet our Consul he sees something very peculiar on the horizon-line."

Keating frowned for a moment in silence, and then coughed, consciously.

"Channing," he began, uncomfortably, "you ought to brace up."

"Brace up?" asked Channing.

"Well, it isn't fair to the rest of us," protested Keating, launching into his grievance. "There's only a few of us here, and we—we think you ought to see that and not give the crowd a bad name. All the other correspondents have some regard for—for their position and for the paper, but you loaf around here looking like an old tramp—like any old beachcomber—and it queers the rest of us. Why, those English artillerymen at the Club asked me about you, and when I told them you were a New York correspondent they made all sorts of jokes about American newspapers, and what could I say?"

Channing eyed the other man with keen delight.

"I see, by Jove! I'm sorry," he said. But the next moment he laughed, and then apologized, remorsefully.

"Indeed, I beg your pardon," he begged, "but it

struck me as a sort of—I had no idea you fellows were such swells—I knew I was a social outcast, but I didn't know my being a social outcast was hurting any one else. Tell me some more."

"Well, that's all," said Keating, suspiciously. "The fellows asked me to speak to you about it and to tell you to take a brace. Now, for instance, we have a sort of mess-table at the hotel, and we'd like to ask you to belong, but—well—you see how it is—we have the officers to lunch whenever they're on shore, and you're so disreputable"—Keating scowled at Channing, and concluded, impotently, "Why don't you get yourself some decent clothes and—and a new hat?"

Channing removed his hat to his knee and stroked it with affectionate pity.

"It is a shocking bad hat," he said. "Well, go on."

"Oh, it's none of my business," exclaimed Keating, impatiently. "I'm just telling you what they're saying. Now, there's the Cuban refugees, for instance. No one knows what they're doing here, or whether they're real Cubans or Spaniards."

"Well, what of it?"

"Why, the way you go round with them and visit them, it's no wonder they say you're a spy."

Channing stared incredulously, and then threw back his head and laughed with a shout of delight.

"They don't, do they?" he asked.

"Yes, they do, since you think it's so funny. If it hadn't been for us, the day you went over to Guantanamo the marines would have had you arrested and court-martialed."

Channing's face clouded with a quick frown. "Oh," he exclaimed, in a hurt voice, "they couldn't have thought that."

"Well, no," Keating admitted grudgingly, "not after the fight, perhaps, but before that, when you were snooping around the camp like a Cuban after rations." Channing recognized the picture with a laugh.

"I do," he said, "I do. But you should have had me court-martialed and shot; it would have made a good story. 'Our reporter shot as a spy, his last words were—' What were my last words, Keating?"

Keating turned upon him with impatience, "But why do you do it?" he demanded. "Why don't you act like the rest of us? Why do you hang out with all those filibusters and runaway Cubans?"

"They have been very kind to me," said Channing, soberly. "They are a very courteous race, and they have ideas of hospitality which make the average New Yorker look like a dog hiding a bone."

"Oh, I suppose you mean that for us," demanded Keating. "That's a slap at me, eh?"

Channing gave a sigh and threw himself back against the trunk of the palm, with his hands clasped behind his head.

"Oh, I wasn't thinking of you at all, Keating," he said. "I don't consider you in the least." He stretched himself and yawned wearily. "I've got troubles of my own."

He sat up suddenly and adjusted the objectionable hat to his head.

"Why don't you wire the C. P.," he asked briskly,

"and see if they don't want an extra man? It won't cost you anything to wire, and I need the job, and I haven't the money to cable."

"The Consolidated Press," began Keating, jealously. "Why—well, you know what the Consolidated Press is? They don't want descriptive writers—and I've got all the men I need."

Keating rose and stood hesitating in some embarrassment. "I'll tell you what I could do, Channing," he said, "I could take you on as a stoker, or steward, say. They're always deserting and mutinying; I have to carry a gun on me to make them mind. How would you like that? Forty dollars a month, and eat with the crew?"

For a moment Channing stood in silence, smoothing the sand with the sole of his shoe. When he raised his head his face was flushing.

"Oh, thank you," he said. "I think I'll keep on trying for a paper—I'll try a little longer. I want to see something of this war, of course, and if I'm not too lazy I'd like to write something about it, but—well—I'm much obliged to you, anyway."

"Of course, if it were my money, I'd take you on at once," said Keating, hurriedly.

Channing smiled and nodded. "You're very kind," he answered. "Well, good-by."

A half-hour later, in the smoking-room of the hotel, Keating addressed himself to a group of correspondents.

"There is no doing anything with that man Channing," he said, in a tone of offended pride. "I offered

him a good job and he wouldn't take it. Because he got a story in the 'International Magazine' he's stuck on himself, and he won't hustle for news—he wants to write pipe-dreams. What the public wants just now is news."

"That's it," said one of the group, "and we must give it to them—even if we have to fake it."

Great events followed each other with great rapidity. The army ceased beating time, shook itself together, adjusted its armor and moved, and, to the delight of the flotilla of press-boats at Port Antonio, moved, not as it had at first intended, to the north coast of Cuba, but to Santiago, where its transports were within reach of their megaphones.

"Why, everything's coming our way now!" exclaimed the "World" manager in ecstasy. "We've got the transports to starboard at Siboney, and the warships to port at Santiago, and all we'll need to do is to sit on the deck with a field-glass and take down the news with both hands."

Channing followed these events with envy. Once or twice, as a special favor, the press-boats carried him across to Siboney and Daiquiri, and he was able to write stories of what he saw there; of the landing of the army, of the wounded after the Guasimas fight, and of the fever-camp at Siboney. His friends on the press-boat sent this work home by mail on the chance that the Sunday editor might take it at space rates. But mail matter moved slowly and the army moved quickly, and events crowded so closely upon each other that Channing's stories, when they reached New York,

were ancient history and were unpublished, and, what was of more importance to him, unpaid for. He had no money now, and he had become a beachcomber in the real sense of the word. He slept the warm nights away among the bananas and cocoanuts on the Fruit Company's wharf, and by calling alternately on his Cuban exiles and the different press-boats, he was able to obtain a meal a day without arousing any suspicions in the minds of his hosts that it was his only one.

He was sitting on the stringer of the pier-head one morning, waiting for a press-boat from the "front," when the "Three Friends" ran in and lowered her dingy, and the "World" manager came ashore, clasping a precious bundle of closely written cable forms. Channing scrambled to his feet and hailed him.

"Have you heard from the chief about me yet?" he asked. The "World" man frowned and stammered, and then, taking Channing by the arm, hurried with him toward the cable office.

"Charlie, I think they're crazy up there," he began, "they think they know it all. Here I am on the spot, but they think—"

"You mean they won't have me," said Channing. "But why?" he asked, patiently. "They used to give me all the space I wanted."

"Yes, I know, confound them, and so they should now," said the "World" man, with sympathetic indignation. "But here's their cable; you can see it's not my fault." He read the message aloud. "Channing, no. Not safe, take reliable man from Siboney." He folded

the cablegram around a dozen others and stuck it back in his hip-pocket.

"What queered you, Charlie," he explained, importantly, "was that last break of yours, New Year's, when you didn't turn up for a week. It was once too often, and the chief's had it in for you ever since. You remember?"

Channing screwed up his lips in an effort of recollection.

"Yes, I remember," he answered slowly. "It began on New Year's eve in Perry's drug store, and I woke up a week later in a hack in Boston. So I didn't have such a run for my money, did I? Not good enough to have to pay for it like this. I tell you," he burst out suddenly, "I feel like hell being left out of this war, with all the rest of the boys working so hard. If it weren't playing it low down on the fellows that have been in it from the start, I'd like to enlist. But they enlisted for glory, and I'd only do it because I can't see the war any other way, and it doesn't seem fair to them. What do you think?"

"Oh, don't do that," protested the "World" manager. "You stick to your own trade. We'll get you something to do. Have you tried the Consolidated Press yet?"

Channing smiled grimly at the recollection.

"Yes, I tried it first."

"It would be throwing pearls to swine to have you write for them, I know, but they're using so many men now. I should think you could get on their boat."

"No—I saw Keating," Channing explained. "He said I could come along as a stoker, and I guess I'll take him up, it seems—"

"Keating said—what?" exclaimed the "World" man. "Keating? Why, he stands to lose his own job if he isn't careful. If it wasn't that he's just married, the C. P. boys would have reported him a dozen times."

"Reported him, what for?"

"Why—you know. His old complaint."

"Oh, that," said Channing. "My old complaint?" he added.

"Well, yes, but Keating hasn't been sober for two weeks, and he'd have fallen down on the Guasimas story if those men hadn't pulled him through. They had to because they're in the syndicate. He ought to go shoot himself; he's only been married three months and he's handling the biggest piece of news the country's had in thirty years, and he can't talk straight. There's a time for everything, I say," growled the "World" man.

"It takes it out of a man, this boat-work," Channing ventured, in extenuation. "It's very hard on him."

"You bet it is," agreed the "World" manager, with enthusiasm. "Sloshing about in those waves, seasick mostly, and wet all the time, and with a mutinous crew, and so afraid you'll miss something that you can't write what you have got." Then he added, as an afterthought, "And our cruisers thinking you're a Spanish torpedo boat and chucking shells at you."

"No wonder Keating drinks," Channing said, gravely. "You make it seem almost necessary."

Many thousand American soldiers had lost themselves in a jungle, and had broken out of it at the foot of San Juan Hill. Not wishing to return into the jungle, they took the hill. On the day they did this Channing had the good fortune to be in Siboney. The "World" man had carried him there and asked him to wait around the water-front while he went up to the real front, thirteen miles inland. Channing's duty was to signal the press-boat, when the first despatch-rider rode in with word that the battle was on. The "World" man would have liked to ask Channing to act as his despatch-rider, but he did not do so because the despatch-riders were either Jamaica negroes or newsboys from Park Row—and he remembered that Keating had asked Channing to be his stoker.

Channing tramped through the damp, ill-smelling sand of the beach, sick with self-pity. On the other side of those glaring, inscrutable mountains, a battle, glorious, dramatic, and terrible, was going forward, and he was thirteen miles away. He was at the base, with the supplies, the sick, and the skulkers.

It was cruelly hot. The heat-waves flashed over the sea until the transports in the harbor quivered like pictures on a biograph. From the refuse of company kitchens, from reeking huts, from thousands of empty cans, rose foul, enervating odors, which deadened the senses like a drug. The atmosphere steamed with a heavy, moist humidity. Channing staggered and sank down suddenly on a pile of rail-

Richard Harding Davis

road ties in front of the commissary's depot. There were some Cubans seated near him, dividing their Government rations, and the sight reminded him that he had had nothing to eat. He walked over to the wide door of the freight depot, where a white-haired, kindly-faced, and perspiring officer was, with his own hands, serving out canned beef to a line of Cubans. The officer's flannel shirt was open at the throat. The shoulder-straps of a colonel were fastened to it by safety pins. Channing smiled at him uneasily.

"Could I draw on you for some rations?" he asked. "I'm from the 'Three Friends.' I'm not one of their regular accredited correspondents," he added, conscientiously, "I'm just helping them for to-day."

"Haven't you got a correspondent's pass?" asked the officer. He was busily pouring square hardtack down the throat of a saddle-bag a Cuban soldier held open before him.

"No," said Channing, turning away, "I'm just helping."

The officer looked after him, and what he saw caused him to reach under the counter for a tin cup and a bottle of lime-juice.

"Here," he said, "drink this. What's the matter with you—fever? Come in here out of that sun. You can lie down on my cot, if you like."

Channing took the tin cup and swallowed a warm mixture of boiled water and acrid lime-juice.

"Thank you," he said, "but I must keep watch for the first news from the front."

A man riding a Government mule appeared on the

bridge of the lower trail, and came toward them at a gallop. He was followed and surrounded by a hurrying mob of volunteers, hospital stewards, and Cubans.

The Colonel vaulted the counter and ran to meet him.

"This looks like news from the front now," he cried.

The man on the mule was from civil life. His eyes bulged from their sockets and his face was purple. The sweat ran over it and glistened on the cords of his thick neck.

"They're driving us back!" he shrieked. "Chaffee's killed, an' Roosevelt's killed, an' the whole army's beaten!" He waved his arms wildly toward the glaring, inscrutable mountains. The volunteers and stevedores and Cubans heard him, open-mouthed and with panic-stricken eyes. In the pitiless sunlight he was a hideous and awful spectacle.

"They're driving us into the sea!" he foamed.

"We've got to get out of here, they're just behind me. The army's running for its life. They're running away!"

Channing saw the man dimly, through a cloud that came between him and the yellow sunlight. The man in the saddle swayed, the group about him swayed, like persons on the floor of a vast ballroom. Inside he burned with a mad, fierce hatred for this shrieking figure in the saddle. He raised the tin cup and hurled it so that it hit the man's purple face.

"You lie!" Channing shouted, staggering. "You lie! You're a damned coward. You lie!" He heard

his voice repeating this in different places at greater distances. Then the cloud closed about him, shutting out the man in the saddle, and the glaring, inscrutable mountains, and the ground at his feet rose and struck him in the face.

Channing knew he was on a boat because it lifted and sank with him, and he could hear the rush of her engines. When he opened his eyes he was in the wheel-house of the "Three Friends," and her captain was at the wheel, smiling down at him. Channing raised himself on his elbow.

"The despatch rider?" he asked.

"That's all right," said the captain, soothingly. "Don't you worry. He come along same time you fell, and brought you out to us. What ailed you—sunstroke?"

Channing sat up. "I guess so," he said.

When the "Three Friends" reached Port Antonio, Channing sought out the pile of coffee-bags on which he slept at night and dropped upon them. Before this he had been careful to avoid the place in the daytime, so that no one might guess that it was there that he slept at night, but this day he felt that if he should drop in the gutter he would not care whether any one saw him there or not. His limbs were hot and heavy and refused to support him, his bones burned like quicklime.

The next morning, with the fever still upon him, he hurried restlessly between the wharves and the cable office, seeking for news. There was much of it; it was great and trying news, the situation out-

side of Santiago was grim and critical. The men who had climbed San Juan Hill were clinging to it like sailors shipwrecked on a reef unwilling to remain, but unable to depart. If they attacked the city Cervera promised to send it crashing about their ears. They would enter Santiago only to find it in ruins. If they abandoned the hill, 2,000 killed and wounded would have been sacrificed in vain.

The war critics of the press-boats and of the Twitchell House saw but two courses left open. Either Sampson must force the harbor and destroy the squadron, and so make it possible for the army to enter the city, or the army must be reinforced with artillery and troops in sufficient numbers to make it independent of Sampson and indifferent to Cervera.

On the night of July 2, a thousand lies, a thousand rumors, a thousand prophecies rolled through the streets of Port Antonio, were filed at the cable office, and flashed to the bulletin-boards of New York City.

That morning, so they told, the batteries on Morro Castle had sunk three of Sampson's ships; the batteries of Morro Castle had surrendered to Sampson; General Miles with 8,000 reinforcements had sailed from Charleston; eighty guns had started from Tampa Bay, they would occupy the mountains opposite Santiago and shell the Spanish fleet; the authorities at Washington had at last consented to allow Sampson to run the forts and mines, and attack the Spanish fleet; the army had not been fed for two days, the Spaniards had cut it off from its base at Siboney; the army would eat its Fourth of July din-

ner in the Governor's Palace; the army was in full retreat; the army was to attack at daybreak.

When Channing turned in under the fruit-shed on the night of July 2, there was but one press-boat remaining in the harbor. That was the Consolidated Press boat, and Keating himself was on the wharf, signaling for his dingy. Channing sprang to his feet and ran toward him, calling him by name. The thought that he must for another day remain so near the march of great events, and yet not see and feel them for himself, was intolerable. He felt if it would pay his passage to the coast of Cuba, there was no sacrifice to which he would not stoop.

Keating watched him approach, but without sign of recognition. His eyes were heavy and bloodshot.

"Keating," Channing begged, as he halted, panting, "won't you take me with you? I'll not be in the way, and I'll stoke or wait on table, or anything you want, if you'll only take me."

Keating's eyes opened and closed, sleepily. He removed an unlighted cigar from his mouth and shook the wet end of it at Channing, as though it were an accusing finger.

"I know your game," he murmured, thickly. "You haven't got a boat and you want to steal a ride on mine—for your paper. You can't do it, you see, you can't do it."

One of the crew of the dingy climbed up the gangway of the wharf and took Keating by the elbow. He looked at him and then at Channing and winked. He was apparently accustomed to this complication.

"I haven't got a paper, Keating," Channing argued soothingly. "Who have you got to help you?" he asked. It came to him that there might be on the boat some Philip sober, to whom he could appeal from Philip drunk.

"I haven't got any one to help me," Keating answered, with dignity. I don't need any one to help me." He placed his hand heavily and familiarly on the shoulder of the deck-hand. "You see that man?" he asked. "You see tha' man, do you? Well, tha' man he's too good for me an' you. Tha' man used to be the best reporter in New York City, an' he was too good to hustle for news, an' now he's—now he can't get a job—see? Nobody'll have him, see? He's got to come and be a stoker."

He stamped his foot with indignation.

"You come an' be a stoker," he commanded. "How long you think I'm going to wait for a stoker? You stoker, come on board and be a stoker."

Channing smiled, guiltily, at his good fortune. He jumped into the bow of the dingy, and Keating fell heavily in the stern.

The captain of the press-boat helped Keating safely to a bunk in the cabin and received his instructions to proceed to Santiago Harbor. Then he joined Channing. "Mr. Keating is feeling bad to-night. That bombardment off Morro," he explained tactfully, "was too exciting. We always let him sleep going across, and when we get there he's fresh as a daisy. What's this he tells me of your doing stoking?"

"I thought there might be another fight to-morrow, so I said I'd come as a stoker."

The captain grinned.

"Our Sam, that deck-hand, was telling me. He said Mr. Keating put it on you, sort of to spite you—is that so?"

"Oh, I wanted to come," said Channing.

The captain laughed comprehendingly. "I guess we'll be in a bad way," he said, "when we need you in the engine-room." He settled himself for conversation, with his feet against the rail and his thumbs in his suspenders. The lamps of Port Antonio were sinking into the water, the moonlight was flooding the deck.

"That was quite something of a bombardment Sampson put up against Morro Castle this morning," he began, critically. He spoke of bombardments from the full experience of a man who had seen shells strike off Coney Island from the proving-grounds at Sandy Hook. But Channing heard him, eagerly. He begged the tugboat captain to tell him what it looked like, and as the captain told him he filled it in and saw it as it really was.

"Perhaps they'll bombard again to-morrow," he hazarded, hopefully.

"We can't tell till we see how they're placed on the station," the captain answered. "If there's any firing we ought to hear it about eight o'clock to-morrow morning. We'll hear 'em before we see 'em."

Channing's conscience began to tweak him. It was time, he thought, that Keating should be aroused and

brought up to the reviving air of the sea, but when he reached the foot of the companion ladder he found that Keating was already awake and in the act of drawing the cork from a bottle. His irritation against Channing had evaporated and he greeted him with sleepy good-humor.

"Why, it's ol' Charlie Channing," he exclaimed, drowsily. Channing advanced upon him swiftly.

"Here, you've had enough of that!" he commanded. "We'll be off Morro by breakfast-time. You don't want that."

Keating, giggling foolishly, pushed him from him and retreated with the bottle toward his berth. He lurched into it, rolled over with his face to the ship's side, and began breathing heavily.

"You leave me 'lone," he murmured, from the darkness of the bunk. "You mind your own business, you leave me 'lone."

Channing returned to the bow and placed the situation before the captain. That gentleman did not hesitate. He disappeared down the companionway, and, when an instant later he returned, hurled a bottle over the ship's side.

The next morning when Channing came on deck the land was just in sight, a rampart of dark-green mountains rising in heavy masses against the bright, glaring blue of the sky. He strained his eyes for the first sight of the ships, and his ears for the faintest echoes of distant firing, but there was no sound save the swift rush of the waters at the bow. The sea lay smooth and flat before him, the sun flashed upon it;

the calm and hush of early morning hung over the whole coast of Cuba.

An hour later the captain came forward and stood at his elbow.

"How's Keating?" Channing asked. "I tried to wake him, but I couldn't."

The captain kept his binoculars to his eyes, and shut his lips grimly. "Mr. Keating's very bad," he said. "He had another bottle hidden somewhere, and all last night—" he broke off with a relieved sigh. "It's lucky for him," he added, lowering the glasses, "that there'll be no fight to-day."

Channing gave a gasp of disappointment. "What do you mean?" he protested.

"You can look for yourself," said the captain, handing him the glasses. "They're at their same old stations. There'll be no bombardment to-day. That's the 'Iowa,' nearest us, the 'Oregon' 's to starboard of her, and the next is the 'Indiana.' That little fellow close under the land is the 'Gloucester.' "

He glanced up at the mast to see that the press-boat's signal was conspicuous; they were drawing within range.

With the naked eye, Channing could see the monster, mouse-colored warships, basking in the sun, solemn and motionless in a great crescent, with its one horn resting off the harbor-mouth. They made great blots on the sparkling, glancing surface of the water. Above each superstructure, their fighting-tops, giant davits, funnels, and gibbet-like yards twisted into the air, fantastic and incomprehensible, but the bulk be-

low seemed to rest solidly on the bottom of the ocean, like an island of lead. The muzzles of their guns peered from the turrets as from ramparts of rock.

Channing gave a sigh of admiration.

"Don't tell me they move," he said. "They're not ships, they're fortresses!"

On the shore there was no sign of human life nor of human habitation. Except for the Spanish flag floating over the streaked walls of Morro, and the tiny blockhouse on every mountain-top, the squadron might have been anchored off a deserted coast. The hills rose from the water's edge like a wall, their peaks green and glaring in the sun, their valleys dark with shadows. Nothing moved upon the white beach at their feet, no smoke rose from their ridges, not even a palm stirred. The great range slept in a blue haze of heat. But only a few miles distant, masked by its frowning front, lay a gayly colored, red-roofed city, besieged by encircling regiments, a broad bay holding a squadron of great warships, and gliding catlike through its choked undergrowth and crouched among the fronds of its motionless palms were the ragged patriots of the Cuban army, silent, watchful, waiting. But the great range gave no sign. It frowned in the sunlight, grim and impenetrable.

"It's Sunday," exclaimed the captain. He pointed with his finger at the decks of the battleships, where hundreds of snow-white figures had gone to quarters. "It's church service," he said, "or it's general inspection."

Channing looked at his watch. It was thirty min-

utes past nine. "It's church service," he said. "I can see them carrying out the chaplain's reading-desk on the 'Indiana.'" The press-boat pushed her way nearer into the circle of battleships until their leaden-hued hulls towered high above her. On the deck of each, the ship's company stood, ranged in motionless ranks. The calm of a Sabbath morning hung about them. The sun fell upon them like a benediction, and so still was the air that those on the press-boat could hear, from the stripped and naked decks, the voices of the men answering the roll-call in rising monotone, "one, two, three, *four;* one, two, three, *four.*" The white-clad sailors might have been a chorus of surpliced choir-boys.

But, up above them, the battle-flags, slumbering at the mast-heads, stirred restlessly, and whimpered in their sleep.

Out through the crack in the wall of mountains, where the sea runs in to meet the waters of Santiago harbor, and from behind the shield of Morro Castle, a great, gray ship, like a great, gray rat, stuck out her nose and peered about her, and then struck boldly for the open sea. High before her she bore the gold and blood-red flag of Spain, and like a fugitive leaping from behind his prison-walls, she raced forward for her freedom, to give battle, to meet her death.

A shell from the "Iowa" shrieked its warning in a shrill crescendo, a flutter of flags painted their message against the sky. "The enemy's ships are coming out," they signaled, and the ranks of white-clad fig-

ures, which the moment before stood motionless on the decks, broke into thousands of separate beings who flung themselves, panting, down the hatchways, or sprang, cheering, to the fighting-tops.

Heavily, but swiftly, as islands slip into the water when a volcano shakes the ocean-bed, the great battleships buried their bows in the sea, their sides ripped apart with flame and smoke, the thunder of their guns roared and beat against the mountains, and, from the shore, the Spanish forts roared back at them, until the air between was split and riven. The Spanish warships were already scudding clouds of smoke, pierced with flashes of red flame, and as they fled, fighting, their batteries rattled with unceasing, feverish fury. But the guns of the American ships, straining in pursuit, answered steadily, carefully, with relentless accuracy, with cruel persistence. At regular intervals they boomed above the hurricane of sound like great bells tolling for the dead.

It seemed to Channing that he had lived through many years; that the strain of the spectacle would leave its mark upon his nerves forever. He had been buffeted and beaten by a storm of all the great emotions; pride of race and country, pity for the dead, agony for the dying, who clung to blistering armor-plates, or sank to suffocation in the sea; the lust of the hunter, when the hunted thing is a fellow-man; the joys of danger and of excitement, when the shells lashed the waves about him, and the triumph of victory, final, overwhelming and complete.

Four of the enemy's squadron had struck their col-

ors, two were on the beach, broken and burning, two had sunk to the bottom of the sea, two were in abject flight. Three battleships were hammering them with thirteen-inch guns. The battle was won.

"It's all over," Channing said. His tone questioned his own words.

The captain of the tugboat was staring at the face of his silver watch, as though it were a thing bewitched. He was pale and panting. He looked at Channing piteously, as though he doubted his own senses, and turned the face of the watch toward him.

"Twenty minutes!" Channing said. "Good God! Twenty minutes!"

He had been to hell and back again in twenty minutes. He had seen an empire, which had begun with Christopher Columbus and which had spread over two continents, wiped off the map in twenty minutes. The captain gave a sudden cry of concern. "Mr. Keating," he gasped. "Oh, Lord, but I forgot Mr. Keating. Where is Mr. Keating?"

"I went below twice," Channing answered. "He's insensible. See what you can do with him, but first —take me to the 'Iowa.' The Consolidated Press will want the 'facts.'"

In the dark cabin the captain found Keating on the floor, where Channing had dragged him, and dripping with the water which Channing had thrown in his face. He was breathing heavily, comfortably. He was not concerned with battles.

With a megaphone, Channing gathered his facts from an officer of the "Iowa," who looked like a

chimney-sweep, and who was surrounded by a crew of half-naked pirates, with bodies streaked with sweat and powder.

Then he ordered all steam for Port Antonio, and, going forward to the chart-room, seated himself at the captain's desk, and, pushing the captain's charts to the floor, spread out his elbows, and began to write the story of his life.

In the joy of creating it, he was lost to all about him. He did not know that the engines, driven to the breaking-point, were filling the ship with their groans and protests, that the deck beneath his feet was quivering like the floor of a planing-mill, nor that his fever was rising again and feeding on his veins. The turmoil of leaping engines and of throbbing pulses was confused with the story he was writing, and while his mind was inflamed with pictures of warring battleships, his body was swept by the fever, which overran him like an army of tiny mice, touching his hot skin with cold, tingling taps of their scampering feet.

From time to time the captain stopped at the door of the chart-room and observed him in silent admiration. To the man who with difficulty composed a letter to his family, the fact that Channing was writing something to be read by millions of people, and more rapidly than he could have spoken the same words, seemed a superhuman effort. He even hesitated to interrupt it by an offer of food.

But the fever would not let Channing taste of the food when they placed it at his elbow, and even as he

pushed it away his mind was still fixed upon the paragraph before him. He wrote, sprawling across the desk, covering page upon page with giant hieroglyphics, lighting cigarette after cigarette at the end of the last one, but with his thoughts far away, and, as he performed the act, staring uncomprehendingly at the captain's colored calendar pinned on the wall before him. For many months later the battle of Santiago was associated in his mind with a calendar for the month of July, illuminated by a colored picture of six white kittens in a basket.

At three o'clock Channing ceased writing and stood up, shivering and shaking with a violent chill. He cursed himself for this weakness, and called aloud for the captain.

"I can't stop now," he cried. He seized the rough fist of the captain as a child clings to the hand of his nurse.

"Give me something," he begged. "Medicine, quinine, give me something to keep my head straight until it's finished. Go, quick," he commanded. His teeth were chattering, and his body jerked with sharp, uncontrollable shudders. The captain ran, muttering, to his medicine chest.

"We've got one drunken man on board," he said to the mate, "and now we've got a crazy one. You mark my words, he'll go off his head at sunset."

But at sunset Channing called to him and addressed him sanely. He held in his hand a mass of papers carefully numbered and arranged, and he gave them up to the captain as though it hurt him to part with them.

"There's the story," he said. "You've got to do the rest. I can't—I—I'm going to be very ill."

He was swaying as he spoke. His eyes burned with the fever, and his eyelids closed of themselves. He looked as though he had been heavily drugged.

"You put that on the wire at Port Antonio," he commanded, faintly; "pay the tolls to Kingston. From there they are to send it by way of Panama, you understand, by the Panama wire."

"Panama!" gasped the captain. "Good Lord, that's two dollars a word." He shook out the pages in his hand until he found the last one. "And there's sixty-eight pages here," he expostulated. "Why, the tolls will be five thousand dollars!" Channing dropped feebly to the bench of the chart-room and fell in a heap, shivering and trembling.

"I guess it's worth it," he murmured, drowsily.

The captain was still staring at the last page.

"But—but, look here," he cried, "you've—you've signed Mr. Keating's name to it! 'James R. Keating.' You've signed his name to it!"

Channing raised his head from his folded arms and stared at him dully.

"You don't want to get Keating in trouble, do you?" he asked with patience. "You don't want the C. P. to know why he couldn't write the best story of the war? Do you want him to lose his job? Of course you don't. Well, then, let it go as his story. I won't tell, and see you don't tell, and Keating won't remember."

His head sank back again upon his crossed arms. "It's not a bad story," he murmured.

But the captain shook his head; his loyalty to his employer was still uppermost. "It doesn't seem right!" he protested. "It's a sort of a liberty, isn't it, signing another man's name to it, it's a sort of forgery."

Channing made no answer. His eyes were shut and he was shivering violently, hugging himself in his arms.

A quarter of an hour later, when the captain returned with fresh quinine, Channing sat upright and saluted him.

"Your information, sir," he said, addressing the open door politely, "is of the greatest value. Tell the executive officer to proceed under full steam to Panama. He will first fire a shot across her bows, and then sink her!" He sprang upright and stood for a moment, sustained by the false strength of the fever. "To Panama, you hear me!" he shouted. He beat the floor with his foot. "Faster, faster, faster," he cried. "We've got a great story! We want a clear wire, we want the wire clear from Panama to City Hall. It's the greatest story ever written—full of facts, facts, facts, facts for the Consolidated Press—and Keating wrote it. I tell you, Keating wrote it. I *saw* him write it. I was a stoker on the same ship."

The mate and crew came running forward and stood gaping stupidly through the doors and windows of the chart-room. Channing welcomed them joyously, and then crumpled up in a heap and pitched

forward into the arms of the captain. His head swung weakly from shoulder to shoulder.

"I beg your pardon," he muttered, "I beg your pardon, captain, but your engine-room is too hot. I'm only a stoker and I know my place, sir, but I tell you, your engine-room is too hot. It's a burning hell, sir, it's a hell!"

The captain nodded to the crew and they closed in on him, and bore him, struggling feebly, to a bunk in the cabin below. In the berth opposite, Keating was snoring peacefully.

. . . . . .

After the six weeks' siege the Fruit Company's doctor told Channing he was cured, and that he might walk abroad. In this first walk he found that during his illness Port Antonio had reverted to her original condition of complete isolation from the world, the press-boats had left her wharves, the correspondents had departed from the veranda of her only hotel, the war was over, and the Peace Commissioners had sailed for Paris. Channing expressed his great gratitude to the people of the hotel and to the Fruit Company's doctor. He made it clear to them that if they ever hoped to be paid those lesser debts than that of gratitude which he still owed them, they must return him to New York and Newspaper Row. It was either that, he said, or, if they preferred, he would remain and work out his indebtedness, checking bunches of bananas at twenty dollars a month. The Fruit Company decided it would be paid more quickly if Channing worked at his own trade, and accordingly

sent him North in one of its steamers. She landed him in Boston, and he borrowed five dollars from the chief engineer to pay his way to New York.

It was late in the evening of the same day when he stepped out of the smoking-car into the roar and riot of the Grand Central Station. He had no baggage to detain him, and, as he had no money either, he made his way to an Italian restaurant where he knew they would trust him to pay later for what he ate. It was a place where the newspaper men were accustomed to meet, men who knew him, and who, until he found work, would lend him money to buy a bath, clean clothes, and a hall bedroom.

Norris, the "World" man, greeted him as he entered the door of the restaurant, and hailed him with a cry of mingled fright and pleasure.

"Why, we didn't know but you were dead," he exclaimed. "The boys said when they left Kingston you weren't expected to live. Did you ever get the money and things we sent you by the Red Cross boat?"

Channing glanced at himself and laughed.

"Do I look it?" he asked. He was wearing the same clothes in which he had slept under the fruit-sheds at Port Antonio. They had been soaked and stained by the night-dews and by the sweat of the fever.

"Well, it's great luck, your turning up here just now," Norris assured him heartily. "That is, if you're as hungry as the rest of the boys are who had the fever. You struck it just right; we're giving a big

dinner here to-night," he explained, "one of Maria's best. You come in with me. It's a celebration for old Keating, a farewell blow-out."

Channing started and laughed.

"Keating?" he asked. "That's funny," he said. "I haven't seen him since—since before I was ill."

"Yes, old Jimmie Keating. You've got nothing against him, have you?"

Channing shook his head vehemently, and Norris glanced back complacently toward the door of the dining-room, from whence came the sound of intimate revelry.

"You might have had, once," Norris said, laughing; "we were all up against him once. But since he's turned out such a wonder, and a war-hero, we're going to recognize it. They're always saying we newspaper men have it in for each other, and so we're just giving him this subscription dinner to show it's not so. He's going abroad, you know. He sails to-morrow morning."

"No, I didn't know," said Channing.

"Of course not, how could you? Well, the Consolidated Press's sending him and his wife to Paris. He's to cover the Peace negotiations there. It's really a honeymoon-trip at the expense of the C. P. It's their reward for his work, for his Santiago story, and the beat and all that—"

Channing's face expressed his bewilderment.

Norris drew back dramatically.

"Don't tell me," he exclaimed, "that you haven't heard about *that!*"

Channing laughed a short, frightened laugh, and moved nearer to the street.

"No," he said. "No, I hadn't."

"Yes, but, good Lord! it was *the* story of the war. You never read such a story! And he got it through by Panama a *day* ahead of all the other stories! And nobody read them, anyway. Why, Captain Mahan said it was 'naval history,' and the 'Evening Post' had an editorial on it, and said it was 'the only piece of literature the war has produced.' We never thought Keating had it in him, did you? The Consolidated Press people felt so good over it that they've promised, when he comes back from Paris, they'll make him their Washington correspondent. He's their 'star' reporter now. It just shows you that the occasion produces the man. Come on in and have a drink with him."

Channing pulled his arm away, and threw a frightened look toward the open door of the dining-room. Through the layers of tobacco-smoke he saw Keating seated at the head of a long, crowded table, smiling, clear-eyed, and alert.

"Oh, no, I couldn't," he said, with sudden panic. "I can't drink; doctor won't let me. I wasn't coming in, I was just passing when I saw you. Good-night, I'm much obliged. Good-night."

But the hospitable Norris would not be denied.

"Oh, come in and say 'good-by' to him, anyhow," he insisted. "You needn't stay."

"No, I can't," Channing protested. "I—they'd make me drink or eat and the doctor says I can't. You mustn't tempt me. You say 'good-by' to him for me,"

he urged. "And Norris—tell him—tell him—that I asked you to say to him, 'It's all right,' that's all, just that, 'It's all right.' He'll understand."

There was the sound of men's feet scraping on the floor; and of chairs being moved from their places.

Norris started away eagerly. "I guess they're drinking his health," he said. "I must go. I'll tell him what you said, 'It's all right.' That's enough, is it? There's nothing more?"

Channing shook his head, and moved away from the only place where he was sure to find food and a welcome that night.

"There's nothing more," he said.

As he stepped from the door and stood irresolutely in the twilight of the street, he heard the voices of the men who had gathered in Keating's honor upraised in a joyous chorus.

"For he's a jolly good fellow," they sang, "for he's a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny!"

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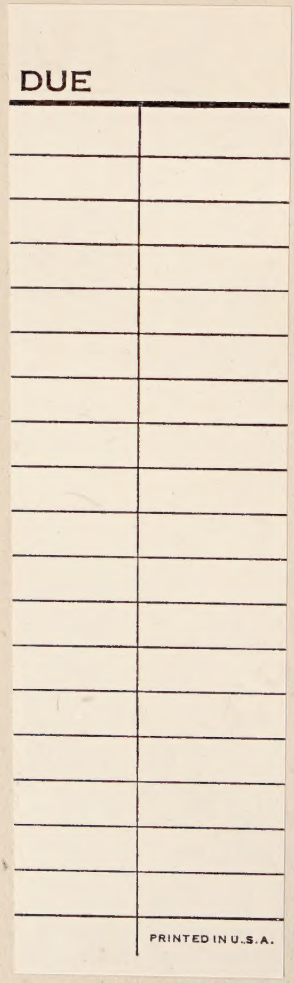

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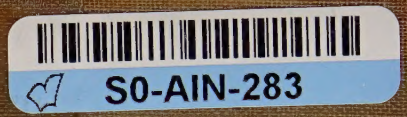
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